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CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

BY

LADY LYTTON BULWER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW-YORK:

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CHEVELEY:

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CHAPTER I.

"To-night in Venice we have placed our scene."
GEORGE COLMAN'S *Epilogue to Clementina.*

"There is a gloom in deep love as in deep water: there is a silence in it which suspends the foot; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface."—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

"Now since we are alone, let us examine
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt——
It is a hidden secret
Which I must fathom." SHELLEY.

"In many ways does the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal."
COLERIDGE.

THE day at length dawned, upon the evening of which Madame d'A.'s long-talked-of and, by some, long-wished-for masquerade was to take place. Fanny and Saville, as every one knew, (at least every one of their own party,) were to figure as the knave and queen of hearts, in the pack of living cards. The Dowager Lady de Clifford had announced it as her intention to go as Queen Elizabeth; consequently her eldest son immediately fixed upon Lord Leicester, while the amiable Herbert resolved upon personating the less-favoured but more intellectual Sir Walter Raleigh, especially as he knew his exemplary parent required a cloak upon all occasions, he determined to have one ready. Major Nonplus meant to aston-

ish the natives by appearing in all the blue cloth and gold lace dignity of an English parish beadle. Mrs. Seymour had resolved upon going as Dominechino's Sibyl; for, to say nothing of a very beautiful face much resembling it, she had a very beautiful scarlet Delhi scarf, which was the very thing for the turban. Her sposo had not yet returned from Padua, so no one knew what he intended to go as. Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, much against his will, had been teazed into going; so, after some trouble, a little glue, a quantity of quills, and a large skin of black kid, he turned into a very respectable, but somewhat overgrown, porcupine. Mowbray had tried by every possible means to find out what Lady de Clifford intended going as; for he knew that ever since his unlucky speech that day at dinner in Milan, she had relinquished her original design of going as Johanna Queen of Naples. Even to the servants had he applied in vain—servants who, in general, act by their employers' secrets as the reeds did when Midas's barber whispered the mystery of his asses' ears to the earth—tell them to the whole world. The fact was, that Julia shrunk from assuming any character, lest it might give him an opportunity of adopting a *pendant* to it, and so facilitate an *eclaircissement*, which, of all things on earth, she most dreaded; for she felt that it would bring about that crisis which must separate them for ever. That time, she felt, would come but too soon, and she might ward it off by keeping things as they were. Vain delusion! who ever yet succeeded, by shutting the eyes of their heart, in lulling it to sleep? She resolved, therefore, to wear a plain blue domino, and told Beryl to put very thick lace to the curtain of her mask, and not to let even her sister know what she intended to go in.

Mowbray, thus foiled at every point, determined to assume the dignity of mystery on his own account, and having secured the dress of a Carthusian friar, told his servant he should not want him at dressing-time, much to the disappointment of Mr. Sanford, who felt greatly hurt at this unpardonable want of confidence on the part of his master, and could only console himself by telling all the couriers, ladies'-maids, and valets at dinner, that *his gentleman's* dress would be the most splendid and handsomest at the ball that night; but though *he* had had a great deal

of trouble in arranging it, no earthly power should get him to tell what it was, as Mr. Mowbray wished it kept a profound secret, and let other people do what they would, he never told anything his master did not wish to have known—when he did not know it himself.

The morning was sultry in the extreme, and every one seemed unable to move off the sofa except Major Nonplus, who was rehearsing his role for the evening in his beadle's dress, running about like an armadillo, fussing and fidgeting every one.

Herbert Grimstone had left the room in disgust, for he had given Monsieur Barbouiller his pamphlet "On the Present Administration" to read, begging that he would make any marginal remarks that struck him. Now, all that did strike him was the extreme arrogance and egotism of the whole affair; consequently, the only remarks he had made were, whereever such sentences occurred as "This, in *my* opinion, was the only measure to save the country, and this the ministers carried," or, "*My* opinion of the Irish appropriation clause was expressed under another administration, and that opinion is now borne out by the conduct of the present ministry, though *their* opinions were decidedly adverse to it when out of office, which proves what *I* have ever asserted—that is, that the Whigs are the only sound, true, liberal, and enlightened legislators, for they *know* that *change* is the quintessence of all reform; and as far as measures (not men) go, they are continually acting upon that knowledge"—all the remarks, then, that Monsieur Barbouiller made were to irradiate the personal pronoun in every such sentence with a glory round it, to the no small amusement of Fanny and Saville, who declared he would get up an opposition pamphlet, and present it to him that night at the ball; and retiring for the purpose of writing it, Fanny was left alone with Mowbray and her sister, who was embroidering the last letter of the motto on Lord Leicester's garter, and whom the former, in spite of herself, was making die with laughter at a *scena* she had got up of the supposed virgin demeanour of the dowager queen, and the amatory devotion of her two courtier sons. Fanny was in the midst of an imaginary speech of the mimic queen to Lord Leicester about his *head* and *hort*, when Lord de Clifford himself en-

tered, and hearing Mowbray's laugh, and seeing Fanny in the middle of the room, with her hands out like his illustrious mother, he said, folding his arms, putting his head back and drawing in, and biting his upper lip, as was his wont when he wanted to be ultra dignified, "As usual, Miss Neville, at your buffoonery, I suppose. If there is one thing more low and degrading than another, and more a proof of imbecility of mind, it is that turn for mimicry which you are eternally indulging in."

"I must say," said Fanny, bowing to this complimentary speech, "that *l'eau benite de la cour* of the Elizabethian age is not quite so sweet, my lord of Leicester, as that of our own."

"Never mind, Miss Neville," said Mowbray; "I have observed that persons who cannot themselves mimic, have no toleration for, but a great dread of, those who can; however, you have some good authorities with you: is it not Percival who says, 'Parody is a favourite flower both of ancient and modern literature; its ludicrous properties derive their wit from association, and never fail to produce admiration and delight, when it unites taste in selection with felicity of application; even licentious specimens of it move to laughter; for we are always inclined to be diverted with mimicry, or ridiculous imitation, whether the original be an object of respect, or indifference, or even of contempt?' Recollect, too, that a polished Athenian audience heard with bursts of mirthful applause, even the discourses of their favourite Socrates burlesqued upon the stage. These 'wise saws,'" concluded Mowbray, laughing, "may perhaps console you for more 'modern instances' of disapprobation."

"I'm not quite sure that they will," said Fanny, "for there was a great deal of truth in Hogarth's answer to the young lady who said she envied him his powers of caricaturing."

"What was that?" asked Mowbray.

"Why, that the sense of the ridiculous had destroyed for him the beautiful; for, that in the face of an angel he could not help detecting something to caricature. It is for the same reason that one never can sympathize with an habitual sneerer, however affectingly and beautifully some of their thoughts may be expressed. I feel this in a peculiar degree with Vol-

taire. One cannot even be sure that he felt it, when he wrote *Zaire vous pleurez!* and this doubt makes one almost check one's own tears, as they rise."

"That is a very profound remark of yours," replied Mowbray, "for there is a depth in all truth, which nothing but sincerity can extract. Even dogs can detect real from affected sorrow or anger, and sympathize with the former, as much as they neglect and pay no attention to the latter."

"Really, Miss Fanny," said Major Nonplus, perpetrating a pirouette, while he flourished his beadle's staff over her head, "I should be quite unhappy if you were my daughter; for they say, so young, and yet so wise, never live long."

"Pardon me," said Mowbray, smiling, "not that I would for a moment set Cicero's authority against yours; but you know the proverb he quotes in his book *De Senectute*. I mean

'Maturè fias senex si diu senex esse velis.'"

"Oh! if you begin with your classics, I'm off," said the major, "for I never had any penchant for the ancients, male or female. Ha! ha! ha! but don't tell Mrs. N. this when you see her," added he, with his finger at the side of his nose, as he made his exit.

"Isn't that d——nd garter finished yet?" said Lord de Clifford gruffly, as he folded a note he had been writing during the foregoing conversation, "Mademoiselle Dantoville would have done it in half the time."

"It is a pity you did not give it to her to do, then," said Fanny indignantly, "as her sister left the room, with tears coursing each other down her cheeks, as she placed the piece of embroidery upon the table, which her lord and master took up, and departed through another door.

"What superior beings your sex are, are they not, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny ironically, as the door closed on her brutal brother-in-law.

"They are superior brutes, when they set about it, certainly," said Mowbray, as he and Fanny went up stairs together to their respective rooms.

That night the lights flitted from room to room, and from corridor to corridor, in Il Leone Bianco—and

"Within the surface of the fleeting river,
The wrinkled image of the city lay
Immoveably unquiet."

The last gondola had rowed away with every one but Lord and Lady de Clifford, and Mowbray, who, knowing that the latter must pass through the drawing-room on her way down stairs, as her bedroom was within it, concealed himself behind a curtain, in the deep recess of one of the windows, that he might ascertain what her dress was. There did not appear to be a soul left in the hotel; for the master and mistress of it, with all the servants, had been invited by Madame de A.'s domestics to go and see the ball. Lord de Clifford had confided "the Virgin Queen" to the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh, while he lingered behind to console his dear Amy, or rather his *bien amiée*, in the school-room, before he joined the brilliant pageant. Poor Julia was still sitting before her toilet, with a heavy heart, and her mask on, listening for the last footsteps to recede, that she might not encounter Mowbray, when the door was unceremoniously opened, and her husband entered, glittering and sparkling in the magnificent dress of Lord Leicester.

"How kind of you," said Julia, springing forward, "to come and let me see you, before you went. Your dress is really beautiful; and how well you have put on the garter," continued she, stooping down to look at it.

"D——n it!" cried he, with an impatient stamp of the foot, "I can't stand here all night for you to look at me as if I was a puppet-show, I want those last books that came from Paris for Mademoiselle Dantoville. I think, poor thing, as she is up there by herself, you might have thought of offering them to her, only you never do anything that you ought to do."

"They are over there," said Lady de Clifford, rather haughtily, pointing to an opposite cheffoniere, with one of her small, white, delicately beautiful hands.

"D——n you, madam," said her tyrant; "what do you mean by speaking to me in that tone, and as he spoke, he inflicted a blow upon the extended hand so violent and sudden, the pain of which was so intense, that poor Julia uttered a faint shriek."

"That's right, madam, make a scene, do, and let all the world know how ill-used you are; why don't you ring the bell for your maid, to come and see what a suffering angel her mistress is? I tell you what it is, madam, if you don't wash your face and dry your

tears, and go to that d—n'd ball directly as becomes my wife, without any further fuss, I'll find some means of bringing you to your senses."

So saying, he walked to the cheffoniere, took the books, and quitted the room through the passage door by which he had entered.

Suffering as she was, both in body and mind, still the habit of obedience and fear were so strong upon her, that poor Julia took off her mask, walked over to a basin, and plunged her face into cold water; but in trying to replace the mask, she found she was unable to raise her right hand; the wrist was out of joint, and swollen to a painful degree. She would gladly have gone to bed, but then, Berryl and all the servants were out; there was no one to undress her, and with her hand in that helpless state it was impossible even to make an attempt at undressing herself: it glanced across her that Mademoiselle Dantoville was up stairs, but she recoiled from the idea of asking her to do anything for her, with a feeling of sickening disgust.

"Yes," said she, "I must go to that horrid ball; if I can but bear the pain, the loose sleeve of my domino will hide my hand, and I must only hold my mask with the other hand till I can find some one to tie it." Having come to this decision, she opened the drawing-room door: it was a dark, lofty, spacious apartment, (like all the Venetian rooms,) at the moment partially and dimly lit by a pair of candles on the high antique mantelpiece, and one solitary Roman lamp on the table. The chains of the lamp, as well as the flame, were blowing about from the draught that came from the casement, and what added to the gloom, was the solemn stillness—only broken in upon by the faint and phantom-like echoes of the plashing oars of every passing gondola.

Lady de Clifford had got half across the room, when Mowbray, anxious to be sure that it was her, leant forward in his ambush to try and see her face, before which, however, she held her mask. The move he had made caused a slight rustling against the curtain. Nervous and ill before, this mysterious noise, added to the sepulchral gloom of the room, completely subdued her already over-excited frame, and tottering towards a sofa, she sank fainting and exhausted upon it, the mask falling at the same time

from her lifeless hand. Shall we confess it? This scene which at any other time, or rather in the presence of any third person, would have driven Mowbray to distraction, between grief and fear now produced but one feeling, that of unmixed happiness. There lay before him, helpless and unconscious, all that he loved on earth; there might he pour out unchecked, unchided, all the deep-hoarded, pent up, burning love, which had been preying upon his breast so long—there lay that worshipped and unapproachable being at his mercy, the slightest touch of whose hand had been more than he had dared to aspire to. And what were the resolves of this man of honour—with most men falsely so called? "Si Leonini pellis non satis est, assuenda vulpina,"—is their invariable motto upon all occasions. Was it Mowbray's? Let him answer for himself. He sprang from his concealment, he knelt beside that senseless form, he bent over those pale cold features as though their spirit had fled, and, by looking, he would have gazed his own into them: he approached the slightly parted and beautiful lips, but their silent eloquence prevailed.

"Yes, sweet soul," said he, retreating, "that pure and angel spirit which ever hovers round and guards you, shall be obeyed. I will not rob you, 'twould be a paltry triumph to take that which you would never give. Good God!" exclaimed he, "well may she say all men are selfish—here am I actually feasting upon, revelling in her misery! I ought to get some water to revive her;" but here a fresh paroxysm of selfishness and self-delusion came over him, and he added, "it will be better to rub her hands." And raising the loose sleeve of her domino, her swollen, drooping, and blackening right hand met his view. "Good heavens," said he, "can that monster, De Clifford, have done this! I heard his hated voice speaking angrily in the next room, and I thought—but then that was too dreadful—that I heard her scream. "Julia! my Julia! yes, mine in spite of them all! only look at me, speak to me, tell how this happened!"—and as he tried to get the rings off her fingers which were now visibly swelling to, his kisses and tears—which deluged her hand, from the pain they occasioned, seemed to bring her back to a sort of half consciousness.

"No! Berryl, no!" murmured she, putting her left arm round Mowbray's neck, and leaning her head

against his, "it was an accident, but bind up my wrist and get me to bed—I'm ill, very ill." And as she spoke, the arm which had encircled Mowbray fell lifelessly beside her, and her head sank back on the pillow. Mowbray now loosened the domino about her throat, and opened it to give her a little more air: in doing so, he perceived a very slight Venetian chain; he drew it out, and attached to it was the little purple enamel watch he had given young Julia. He touched the spring mechanically, the watch opened, and, a white leaf dropped out: he raised it, thinking it might be a bit of paper that the child had placed there; but on examining it, it proved to be the dried leaf of a water-lily, folded, and in small rose-colored letters were painted on it the day and hour he had plucked it at Como."

"By heavens she loves me!" cried he exultingly, as he kissed and replaced the silent tell-tale. He felt that upon this conviction he could live for years without even betraying it to her, much less encroaching on it, by asking or hoping more—nay, more he could not have borne; he felt as if it would have been sacrilege to let any subsequent joy disperse or even blend with the intense, the unalloyed happiness of that moment; for there are feelings on the mysterious altars of the heart, so subtle, so holy, so impalpably delicate, that the realities that rivet, destroy them like the fairy hues on some rare flowers: too beautiful to last, they perish at the touch. At that moment, had Julia been conscious of his presence, Mowbray would not have asked her if she loved him; even her voice, so loved —so soft—which for him had a haunting charm,

> "Like the voiceless words
> Of the flowers and the birds,"

would have dispelled the Elysian that then filled his heart, for he felt that the whole book of fate did not contain such another leaf for him as that of the faded lily he had just found. A few moments more he gave to letting his new-found happiness take root in his heart; and then, seeing no chance of recovering Julia without medical assistance, he gently placed some chairs by the side of the sofa, to prevent her falling in case she revived before his return, and locked her bedroom door from without, first writing upon a slip of paper, "Berryl, Lady de Clifford is very ill,

return immediately." Then to prevent the possibility of any intruder, locked the drawing-room door, and hurrying down the stairs, went out at the back of the house, and ran along the narrow streets, till he reached the *Chiesa del Redentore*, a few doors from which he found a surgeon, who seeing Mowbray's pale, agitated face, and at first from his dress mistaking him for a capuchin, exclaimed, "Casa stupenda! avrà aduto forse qualche terrore mio padre?"

Mowbray explained to him briefly as possible, that an English lady at Il Leone Bianco had been suddenly taken ill through meeting with an accident, and putting her wrist out of joint; and urged him to make all possible speed, almost dragging the poor doctor along as he spoke. In his eagerness his hood had fallen off, and discovered his crisp, curling, dark brown hair, Achilles-like head, and handsome face, as unlike a monk's as needs be, to say nothing of the perfections of his mouth and teeth, which differed widely from any member's of that worthy fraternity. At sight of such a handsome cavaliero, a light seemed to break upon the doctor, whom Mowbray would hardly give time to collect his bandages and necessary implements, exclaiming every moment, "Audiamo, partiamo! Signor Dottore;" whereupon the doctor whistled out, with a Figaro nod of the head, "Chi ha amor nel petto ha le sprone ne i fianchi."

At length the doctor's cloak was on, and they had just gained the threshold of the door, when a stout brown damsel, with a voice like a peacock, came screaming after the poor Esculapius, to tell him that he would lose his supper, which was quite ready; but the only notice he took of this, was the rather ungracious one of "Tace, tace, Biondetta, tre donne e un occa fan un mercato." Embarking at the nearest canal, Mowbray told the gondoliers to row with all speed to the Palazzo Barberigo, (which Madame de A. had hired,) in order that he might get the note conveyed to Berryl, and then proceeded as quickly as possible to Il Leone Bianco. On arriving he hurried up stairs before the doctor, so as to unlock the drawing-room door: the noise he made in doing so roused Lady de Clifford, who moved slightly.

"Come in, doctor," said Mowbray. "What do you think had better be done? She appears to have been insensible ever since I went for you, and all her fami-

ly being at this ball of Madame de A.'s, I am doubly anxious about this poor lady."

"Sicuro," said the doctor, with a half smile, as he proceeded to feel Lady de Clifford's pulse; and, then shaking his head, asked for some eau de Cologne and other restoratives. Mowbray flew to his dressing-room for them, and when he returned found that Julia began to evince symptoms of returning animation. Her brow was slightly contracted, as if from the pain occasioned her by pressing her wrist; a faint murmur escaped her lips. Mowbray bent down to listen to what she was trying to say, and distinctly heard the words, "Dear Mowbray!" Totally forgetting that the poor doctor did not understand one word of English, and that if he had he would not have known who Mowbray was, he turned to him and said—"She is asking for her maid; and—and—she is not come yet."

"Well, well," replied the doctor, "you take her left hand and rub the palm of it, while I bandage up the other."

Mowbray almost wished that she would not revive, that his occupation might continue. Soon, however, she opened her eyes, and looked vacantly at him and then at the doctor; at length she started wildly up, and looking round, put her hand to her head, and said, "Where am I?"

"Here—at home—in the drawing-room," said Mowbray gently. "Dear Lady de Clifford, you have been very ill," continued he, his voice trembling with emotion; "you have met with some terrible accident; and—and sprained your wrist, I believe—so I went for a doctor to look at it—and this is he."

"You went for a doctor!" said Julia, straining back her hair, and looking wildly at Mowbray, "and who—when—I mean where is my child—where is my sister—where are they all? and why am I here with you alone? In mercy tell me what has happened;" and she flung herself frantically on her knees before him.

"O God! this is too much!" said Mowbray, lifting her on the sofa; "do be calm, dearest Lady de Clifford, and I will tell you everything. They are at the ball—Madame de A.'s ball. We were all going. You hurt your wrist in some way or other, and fainted, I suppose, from the pain. Happening to pass through the room at the time, I found you in a state of insen-

sibility, and went for this man; that is all, upon my honour; but take care of your hand—you see it has been bandaged."

"O yes! I remember," said she, with a slight shudder, looking at her hand, "you are ver—very good, Mr. Mowbray. I am shocked to have given you so much trouble; but pra—pray don't let me detain you from the ball."

"Till your maid (whom I have sent for) comes, you certainly must detain me," replied he, coldly, "and then I will rid you of my presence."

"Rid me!" repeated Julia, raising her eyes, filled with tears, to his—"do forgive me, and don't think me ungrateful."

"Not unless angels are so," said Mowbray; and then turning quickly round to the doctor, who was steeping lint in eau de Cologne at the table, asked him what he thought the signora had best take. Whereupon that worthy man advanced with a scientific shrug, and again feeling Lady de Clifford's pulse, put the usual Italian medical query, whether about a broken neck or a scratched finger—

"Avreble 'ella forse fatto una caduta, signora?"

Lady de Clifford answered, "No—that she had had no fall."

At which the doctor again shrugged his shoulders, and raised his eyebrows, and saying he would send her some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught for herself, turned to Mowbray to ask the lady's name to whom they were to be sent; and the latter having written it on a piece of paper, the doctor took leave, promising to call early in the morning. The door closed, and Julia and Mowbray were again alone. A few moments' perfect silence ensued, which Lady de Clifford was the first to break.

"I am sure," said she, hesitatingly, "I have much to thank you for. Will you forgive all the trouble I have occasioned you? I—I—am quite well now; and pray don't let me detain you any longer—here—away—that is, from the ball, I mean," added she, extending her hand to Mowbray, and making an effort to rise as she spoke.

"Julia!" cried he, seizing her proffered hand, and kneeling passionately before her, "all disguise is useless—the veil is rent—the idol has revealed its own mysteries—the dense masses of doubt—of danger—

aye, and of duty, that concealed them, have crumbled around us, and the immutable truth has flooded my soul with a divine light, that neither time nor eternity can shadow nor extinguish.

"Julia, *you love me!* Nay, tremble not, nor turn from me. Yes, *you love me!*—dear, dear words! It is your heart, and not your lips, which have pronounced them. That heart, which, in spite of yourself, is mine, will not, cannot, conceal its minutest pulsation from me; and surely mine has not been in your possession so long, without convincing you that no other ever yet beat with the same devotion, the same truth, the same purity of worship towards any human being. I know all that you would say, and that others would suspect; for I know the fatal, the insurmountable barrier that exists between us; but is it because one shrine is richer than any other, that we cannot kneel at it, without being suspected of sacrilege? Were you like other women, I might love you with the ordinary love of men—if that be more than brute selfishness, which destroys, while it degrades, deserves that sacred name; but the moment I respected you less, I should love you less—think you, then."

"O God!" cried Julia, struggling to release her hand, "have mercy on me. If you indeed love me, release me. You know I must not, ought not, to listen to such language from any human being. I know not what accident may have revealed to you my guilty, my unpardonable weakness! Despise me, I fear you must; but pity, while you despise."

"Julia!" said Mowbray, solemnly, releasing her hand, "why degrade yourself by talking of guilt! Do you think that the great God is a just or an unjust being? Has he made any grammatical distinctions in the Decalogue? Has he said to man, thou shalt commit such and such sins, and to woman, thou shalt not? And if man, who is in the daily habit of violating the most sacred and explicit of God's commandments, still hopes for mercy, shall woman be put beyond the pale of redemption, for a mere feeling, which is involuntary?"

"Certainly not," said Julia, "I firmly believe, that however custom, and the laws they themselves make, may absolve men for the violation of God's commandments in this world, that they will have to give a strict and fearful account in the next. Yet, sin in

others is no excuse for sin in ourselves. Did we merely owe duty towards man, there would be nothing sacred or binding in our obligations. And their great enormities might palliate, while they provoked, lesser ones in us; but upon the first and faintest dawning of every sin, above all those 'gainst which the Almighty has set his canon,' let us ask our hearts, with the pure and obedient Hebrew captive, 'Can I do this, and commit this great sin against God?' for, depend upon it, this self-interrogation is our only safeguard, as it can be our only standard of right and wrong."

"And think you," replied Mowbray, mournfully, "that I would wish or ask you to sin against that God in whom my whole trust for you is placed? Ah, Julia! you little know the nature and depth of what I feel for you,—or you would know that almost my every thought of you is a prayer; for angels themselves are not purer than the feelings you inspire. Your sorrows alone would make you sacred in my eyes. Had you been happy, I might have been wretch enough to have attempted the destruction of that happiness; but as it is, the foul fiend himself would shrink from injuring you. Your friend none can blame, nor prevent my being. I know how suspicious the title sounds, when it is adopted by a lover; but there is a friendship which is love—in everything but passionate vows, caprice, and inconstancy; and such you shall find mine for you, Julia. This night has been the crisis of my—of our fate; and it has been dark and starless till now. When the moon is rising gloriously, see how it floods that wide waste of waters, brightening even the dark and death-like burdens it bears upon its bosom. And now its rays fall upon the wings of the diamond dove in your hair, and they actually seem to flutter and hover over you. Be this unto us as an omen and a promise of brighter, happier hours."

And again Mowbray knelt before her; and as he covered her hand (which she no longer withheld) with kisses, their tears fell hot and fast, and mingled as they fell.

"But that poor hand," said he, "tell me, was it, could it have been that monster De Clifford who struck you?"

Julia turned away her head, and made no answer.

"Ah! I see how it is," said he, "*chi tace confessa.* Good heavens! what are some men made of!"

"Do," said Julia, in order to change the subject, "go to Madame de A.'s. Indeed, I am much, much better now; and thank you a thousand times for the care you have taken of me. Do, dear friend, go."

"Bless you for those words," cried Mowbray, "and never, never shall you find me unworthy of so enviable a title; but, indeed, I will not, cannot leave you, till your maid comes; then I will go—for, for your sake I ought to be seen at that horrid ball. You need not, however, dread my remaining, for my heart is too full to say more to-night; but, O Julia! to-morrow I will try and convince you that all men are not wholly and solely actuated by motives of selfishness." As he finished speaking, he walked over to the table and poured out a glass of water; while he was drinking it, a knock came to the door.

"Come in," said Lady de Clifford, and Berryl entered in the greatest possible state of trepidation.

"Good *evens*, my Lady, what *as appened?*" exclaimed she, "for I left you quite well and ready dressed, and I got this slip of paper, saying your ladyship was took suddenly *hill;* and I should have been here sooner, but Madam *Hangelique*, the Countess's maid, tried to persuade me *hin* her broken *Henglish*, that it was only a masquerading hoax of the Count's *valley*, that gave me the paper; but though I saw plenty of blue dominoes, they had none of them your air, my lady, so I come away—for all they could say to me. And I hope your ladyship hain't been very *hill.*"

"No, only an accident, Berryl. I put my wrist out of joint and fainted from the pain, and Mr. Mowbray, who happened to pass through the room, saw me, and was good enough to go for a doctor, who has bandaged it up, and I dare say it will soon be well."

Berryl, who now for the first time perceived Mowbray, dropped him a low courtesy, with an "I beg your pardon, sir, I didn't *hobserve* you before. Was her ladyship long in the faintin fit?"

"Not very long," replied he, "and Doctor Pozzo is to send some leeches for her hand, and a composing draught to be taken on going to bed."

"Let me look at your hand, my lady," said Berryl; and then shaking her head, she muttered, "*h*accident indeed! No, but more of that wretch's *andy* work."

"I'm sure," said Lady de Clifford, turning to Mowbray, and anxious to prevent Berryl saying anything

further, "I have a thousand apologies to make for detaining you so long from the ball."

"Not at all," said he, in a tone of common place gallantry. "I'm too happy if I have been of the slightest use;" and then added in a still more careless tone, turning to Berryl, "I don't suppose I have lost much of the spectacle—have I?"

"No, sir, not much, only the game with the living cards, which was very beautiful and *curus*, the way they were *hall* shuffled, and cut, and dealt three times over, and each time *Mussne* de Rivoli, who is the knave of spades, you know, sir, contrived always to get next Miss Neville, and then there was great laughing, and Major Nonplus would come up and insist upon fair play, and their being dealt over again."

"And how do Queen Elizabeth and her court get on?" asked Mowbray smiling.

"O *p'raps* it's very wrong of me to say, sir, and a servant may have no business to make remarks, but I should say it was quite *rediclus—hevery* one was laughing, especially when the French gentleman that went as the Hedgehog caught the old lady's ruff in one of his quills; and, then, Sir, Something Sally, that's Mr. Herbert, you know, sir, drew his sword, but the hedgehog poking his quills in his eyes he was glad to make his escape, and then how the people did laugh, to be sure! but some of the dresses are most *helegunt* and splendid, certainly."

"Well, you really make me long to see it all," said Mowbray, smiling; and then turning to Julia, and holding out his hand, added, "and as I think I must rather be in your way than otherwise, I'll now wish you good-night, my dear Lady de Clifford, sincerely hoping that you may feel no bad effects from your accident by to-morrow; and I'm sure I can't leave you in better or more careful hands than Mrs. Berryl's."

"That's what I call a real gentleman," said the latter, as Mowbray closed the door after him; "but how Mr. Sanford could go and tell every one that his dress was the most splendid thing that ever was seen, unless he wanted to mystify us all, I'm sure I cannot conceive; but it is no great matter, for such a *andsome* man looks well in any thing, while all the velvet and jewels in the world won't make some people look even passable."

Leaving Julia to the care of Berryl, we will follow Mowbray. When he got into his gondola, to go to the Palazzo Barberigo, the sea was no longer dark, but like a sheet of diamond-water, from the light of the bright moon above it, and everything looked and sounded happier than when he had floated over it an hour or two before; and as he landed at the terrace of the Palazzo, a boat passed in which a very sweet voice, that seemed to rise from the waters, was singing the barcarola "*Or che in Cielo*," from the Marino Faliero. This had scarcely passed, before another bark glided by, with an apparently happier party, who were singing most exquisitely that beautiful terzetto from Otello, "*Ti parli l'amore*." Mowbray lingered on the steps, and joined in it, till he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a voice exclaim, (which he instantly recognised as Saville's,) "No doubt, holy father, '*ti parli l'amore*' is your form of absolution when confessing a pretty novice; but now tell me, in plain English, what makes you so late?"

"I have been here some time," stammered Mowbray.

"Then I hope you saw how well we played our cards?"

"Yes—no—that is, it was so hot, I did not go into the house—yet, in fact, just as I was coming away, poor Lady de Clifford was taken very ill, and nobody being left in the house, I had to go for a doctor, which detained me; in short, (but don't tell her sister, at least to-night, for it would only make her unhappy, and do no good,) her husband gave her a blow on her hand that put her wrist out of joint, and she fainted from the pain."

"Brute!" exclaimed Saville; "how I long to kick that man! and I shall have to do it at last."

"Pray resign in my favour," said Mowbray, "whenever the opportunity occurs; but how is this—I left you the knave of hearts, and now I find you an English sailor?"

"A distinction without a difference, perhaps you think," said Saville; "but my black-eyed Susan is waiting for me, and I have a squib to give that illustrious member of the British senate, Mr. Herbert Grimstone; so *addio mio caro!*" saying which, he darted off, leaving Mowbray to choose what path he liked.

As he advanced into the garden, he found it brilliantly illuminated, with groups of gorgeously-dressed people representing different scenes, eras, and epochs in Italian history; and one end of the garden, in especial, presented a scene of dazzling splendour, being fitted up as the Piazzo di San Marco, representing that magnificent festival given on the defeat of the rebels, and the end of the Candian war, the splendour of which Petrarch complained of being unable to find an adequate Latin name for. There sat, in the mimic marble gallery over the porch, the Doge, with his princely train, sheltered by golden canopies; Petrarch on his right alone, and the four-and-twenty noble Venetian youth headed by a Ferrarese; then came the group of English barons, (some of the blood royal, as Petrarch described them,) and the flashing of bright eyes, and crimsoning of soft cheeks, amid the waving of white plumes, and the glittering of costly jewels—altogether the scene was one of fairy-like enchantment, but too gay and buoyant to accord with the dreamy but melancholy happiness of Mowbray's mind that night; so he lingered but a moment, and walked silently on till he reached the house; he entered the vestibule just as Saville (whom he knew by his dress, in spite of a very good and characteristic mask) was presenting a scroll of paper to Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he accosted after the following manner:—

"You be a parliament man now: well, nobody 'ill ever be the better for that; howsomedever, I wish as how you'd just present this here petition the next time parliament's *re*rogued, for I know it's *pro*rogued at present. Now mind, my hearty, if you don't, it's all up with you at your next '*lection*—I tell ee so, and I'm a Triverton man; and I ha'n't been aboard an English man-o'war so long without knowing something about unfurling *canvass*, d'ye see? *Whoy* you're sadly gone down in the world as you've got on in it; for when she was on her reign (pointing to his mother, who was leaning on his arm) you did some good, for you brought *baccy* into England; so put that into your pipe and smoke it, as Muster Hume says in his history of England."

"My dear," said the Dowager Lady de Clifford to her son, moving onward, "this is vaustly disagreeable

to be beset by such vulgar people; throw away that paper that horrid man gave you."

"O, my dear mamma, all these sort of things are the life of a masquerade, and we may find some fun in this when we get home."

"Please your most gracious Majesty," said Major Nonplus, dragging *ex officio* an unfortunate youth by the collar—"here is a vagrant that has been lately shooting over your Majesty's royal demesne of Blichingly, in ———shire, come to crave your highness's pardon."

"Who is it?" whispered her Majesty to Sir Walter Raleigh, pointing to a thread papery-looking neither man nor boy, dressed as Master Slender."

"O, Lord Charles Dinely, Lord Shuffleton's youngest son, who has just left Harrow, and is here with his tutor; and if you remember, my dear mamma, you were kind enough to say, that I might ask him to shoot at Blichingly, whenever he was in the neighbourhood."

"O, ah! true, my dear, I'm vaustly glad he's here, for I'll ask him about my plantation near the labyrinth, as he has been so recently at Blichingly." So saying, she graciously turned to the lordling, who had a vast deal of unlicked cubbism about him, and said—

"I hope your lordship had good sport at Blichingly."

"Pretty fair! but all the keepers confoundedly stupid."

"Did your lordship," (his lordship was just seventeen)—"did your lordship see the new plantation?"

"Yes."

"Were the elders and birch trees coming on?"

"'Pon my honour, I don't know, for I'm no achorologist; only know, that when I left Harrow, *birch was doucedly backward.*"

At the conclusion of this brilliant sally, Lord Charles turned upon his heel with a horse laugh, and left the poor dowager lamenting her unusual waste of civility.

Weary of all around him, Mowbray left the hall and wandered up stairs, till he came to the room in which Titian died; it was deserted, save by his pictures of the Magdalene and the Venetian senator, and it might be haunted by the spirit of him that painted them. Mowbray flung himself upon a couch, and gazing upon the deep and mournful beauty of the face before

him, which looked as if to it had also been said, "Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much," a train of sweet and bitter thoughts came over him, and he wept like a child; he put his hand into his bosom for a handkerchief; the one he drew out seemed as if it had been stolen from the wardrobe of Titania, so fine was its texture, and so delicately beautiful the point lace with which it was trimmed:—it was Lady de Clifford's, he had taken by mistake; and it was still wet with her tears. "This at least," said he, "shall never leave me, all my thoughts be in it,

> 'Unless it be to think that she is by,
> And feed upon the shadow of perfection.'"

Mowbray had scarcely replaced the handkerchief, before Major Nonplus, staff in hand, stumped into the room.

"God bless me, Mowbray, is that you? had no idea you were here alone, or should have come to you before, hope you're not offended though—it's the way at these masks, you know, every one for themselves. Capital fun we've had to be sure, and through the whole of it, I assure you, I've kept English order and regularity, by keeping an eye upon them all; and, as I told the young people, they may flirt as much as they like (for that's natural) in the rooms where there are plenty of lights and people, but no tête-à-têtes and dark walks, and that sort of thing. Well, I must say," continued he, mopping his face with a silk pocket handkerchief, which in colours and dimensions might have been mistaken for the union jack, "I must say, though I say it who should not say it, that I'm always trying to do for everybody."

"God knows you are," groaned Mowbray, and thinking this quintessence of bore might be diluted and neutralized by the crowd, he accepted his invitation to go down stairs. After remaining another half hour, and sauntering through the rooms without a mask, that every one might see that he was there, he was preparing to go as day was beginning to dawn. And all the people looking jaded, dusty, and ugly, between the invidious discoveries of the two lights, which were unnaturally turning against their own—the real light making all that was real, look bad, and the artificial light making all that was artificial look worse. Just as Mowbray was leaving the room, he was rivet-

ed by Queen Elizabeth's dulcet accents, accosting Lord Charles Dinely as follows:—

"When your lordship returns to England, I hope you will shoot at Blichingly whenever you please, for the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have is supplying our friends with game."

"O, I'm sure they can never want it while you're in the country," replied Lord Charles, with a clodpole bow and grin, which luckily her ladyship took for a compliment.

"Ah! Mowbray, how do?" said he, extending one finger, "you'll soon be a marquis, my boy, for when I left your uncle, old Lord Cheveley was expected to kick every minute; when it happens, don't forget I've four sisters, one higher than another, and you may have your choice of them; or if you prefer it, two cousins also, rather plain about the head. Where are you staying? Red Lion, eh? Silver Lion, what do they call it?"

"Yes," said Mowbray, "good night, or rather morning, for it,

> . : . . . . 'like the spirit of a youth,
> That means to be of note, begins by times.'"

On getting into his gondola, the fresh sea breezes that played upon his cheek made him less inclined for sleep than ever. Upon reaching the hotel, he saw Berryl, and having ascertained that Julia had at length fallen asleep, not being able to follow her example, he sat down and wrote her the following letter.

CHAPTER II.

. . . . . "I love thee, and I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee ———"

P. B. Shelley.

"There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart."

Wordsworth.

"Oh! none but gods have power their love to hide."

Marlowe.

"The dreadful struggles which have taken place, dearest, between reason and my love for you, have so agitated and exhausted me, that were I to die for it to-morrow, I must write to you to-day. O Julia! what is there in your very name that I cannot even write it without my cheek kindling, and my heart glowing as if a 'scintilla dell' immortal fisco' had for the first time fallen upon it, and filled it with the heaven from whence it came. Bear with me, then, while I, for the first and last time, link my soul, my fate, my name, with yours. Remember, that your breath still lingers on my cheek—your touch still thrills in mine—our tears are not yet dried, and the bloom is still fresh upon every feeling. These are bad materials for a stoic; but down itself is capable of petrifaction. It has been said that

'Love's heroism is equal to all acts,
But seldom to forbearance.'

"He knew not love who said so, for love is not love that is not equal to all things for the sake of what it loves; and if forbearance be its test, it will know nought else. Julia, my life began when I knew you, therefore it would be needless to go back to a prior stage of my existence, were it not to give you some guarantee for the stability of my promises. The sort of mother a man has had, may, generally speaking,

be pretty correctly known by the estimate he entertains of her sex. There are two kinds of mothers, who invariably engender in their sons a respect and consideration for women—the one is the mother of superior intellect, properly evinced in the education of her children, and is even more solicitous in weeding than planting their dispositions;—the other is one who, without many intellectual advantages, possesses that sort of moral pre-eminence and right-mindedness, which, proved by every act of her life, (for such persons seldom deal in aphorisms and fine sentiments,) induce her sons to believe, and rightly too, that a good woman is the best friend and counsellor that man, with all his boasted superiority, can have. My mother united both moral and intellectual pre-eminence, and my father dying when I was only six years old, and knowing that both rank and wealth awaited me, that exemplary woman devoted her life to endeavouring to make me not wholly unworthy of her and of them; and if I often blush to think that her labour of love has produced no better or more abundant harvest, still I hope that some of the good seed has remained; for never does an unworthy thought arise in my mind, that, if filtered through the memory of my mother's care, does not become purer and better. To you I am not ashamed to own, that every night brings me back to my childhood, when I knelt at my mother's feet: I still feel her hand upon my head, and hear her blessing, when I have done nothing to forget it. To some this might appear puerile—I pity them—and am content that you are not of the number. Every day convinces me that both evil and good come with the understanding—how much of the latter (or *vice versa*) within the book of memory, does our reason translate to us, which, when we first heard it, was but as the meaningless sounds of an unknown language. I now know and feel the meaning of my mother's constant injunction to me—to be, and not to seem it, constitutes the only difference between virtue and vice; for the former enables one to adhere on all occasions steadily and resolutely to the right path, the other is a straw in the wind, blown about in every quarter, as accident, inclination, or interest may direct. All mere seemers must be hypocrites, and while they have a painful tenacity about their character, are not in the least par-

ticular as to their conduct, just as a prude cares infinitely more for her reputation than she does for her virtue. Think you, then, that in my conduct towards you, it is the world's opinion I either court or succumb to? No—too well I know the 'perilous stuff,' the hollow echoes, the mean interests, and meaner ambitions that world is made of, which chooses its favourites, as the Romans did their generals, solely from being fortunate; for the vice that revolts, and is unpardonable, when seen through rags, is concealed and becomes charming in velvet. Believe, then, that God and yourself are the sole directors of my conduct, the sole influencers of my motives. Shall I confess it? when I first knew you, you were to me an enigma —at one moment I thought your placidity and endurance arose from that inane sort of apathy, which, happily for themselves, so many of your sex possess —again I attributed it to hatred, which is a strong endurer; but then in hatred there is a buoyancy which bears one up upon the turbulent surface of defiance, and never permits one to ride at anchor on the calm of resignation; of the former you appeared to know nothing, while of the latter you seemed perfect mistress. During this first vague and uncertain dawn of your character, I availed myself of the chartered corruption of society, and allowed myself to be in love with you; but as the meridian splendour and cloudless purity of that character burst upon me—as I found that, like the great heathen's idea of the Deity, your whole nature was truth, and light was its shadow, and that your endurance of injuries and insults arose neither from the impotence of imbecility nor from the supernatural strength of hate, but from the highest and best motives which human nature is capable of being subdued and impelled by—then, Julia, I loved you! How I struggled against that love, God and my own heart alone know; for I could not breathe the same atmosphere with you, without at least trying to become better—yes, my heart,

> 'Like the dark web that whitens in the sun,
> Grew pure from being purely shone upon;'

and if love erected an altar on an unhallowed site, esteem consecrated and made it sacred; for those feelings which nature refused to make dumb, respect constrained into silence—a silence which never

should have been broken but for the circumstances which occurred last night—and how was it broken then? Ah, Julia! was it not the voice of your own feelings that echoed through mine, and the sound you had yourself awakened terrified and appalled you! But be calm, for the echo has died away. Henceforth all shall be silent, though sleepless as before, and the rosy words on that dear lily I will try and remember only as the inscription on those of the statues of Isis, which shall haunt me with the mysterious sounds of—'I am all that has been, that shall be, and none among mortals has hitherto taken off my veil.'

"To prove the sincerity of my resolution, I would leave you to-morrow, but that the scene of yesterday rushes back upon my memory, and I cannot divest myself of the painful yet delightful idea, that during this journey I may be again some slight protection and of some trifling use to you; and to leave you ill, deserted, and neglected, is more than I can, than I ought to do. Once in England, you will, at least, be within reach of your own family, and then, or perhaps before then, never will I knowingly obtrude myself into your presence; but I will not conceal from you, that a shudder comes over me, when I think that there may be a crisis in your fate, too terrible, too overwhelming for even you to bear up against. Yes, a moment may come, when your endurance, which is as a rock, and your virtue, which is as a beacon, may be wrecked in the dark treachery of an unexpected whirlpool.

"I know an instance, and only one, of a woman who had endured more, because she had loved more than you—and who was a better wife, because there was more scope for sacrifices and exertion in her lot than even in yours. Yes, Julia, that woman had loved her husband deeply and devotedly for years—had anticipated his every wish—concealed his every fault—promoted his every interest, real or imaginary—endured the violence of his temper, which vented itself in acts of personal brutality, that even by his own acknowledgment amounted to madness—had writhed severely, but silently, under the interference, jealousies, and falsehoods of his family; nay, more, had played the Greselda, when her hearth and home had been polluted by the presence of his mistresses—(when of her own sphere of life)—and in point of

money had left herself pennyless to supply his extravagance. All this she did, and all this she bore without a murmur for years, or without even letting her own mother guess at its existence; and on one occasion, when he had committed a personal outrage on her, of so sanguinary and brutal a nature, that he left his house and wrote to her, saying, 'that having eternally disgraced himself, he should fly the country, and announce ill-health as the reason of his retirement from public life'—she generously but foolishly pitying this Lucifer spirit in his fall, who never knew pity for, or remorse about, his conduct to her, brought him back, forgave, and hushed up everything. But to be under such an obligation to a woman, and that woman his wife! was what his mean sordid nature could never brook; and from that moment he organized a deep-laid plot against his poor victim.

"He spent a whole year in looking out for a mistress, as he would for a house or a horse, and when he found one to his mind, (a low person, who, with her sisters, kept a school near a watering-place,) the next thing was to take a villa for his wife, so as to have London to himself. This done, finding utter neglect not sufficient, and eternally telling her that they would be happier apart, he then spent six months in endeavouring to goad her into an open rupture, which, for the sake of her children, she was determined not to be goaded into.

"One day, in especial, she implored him, with tears, to tell her what she had done to displease him, or could do to please him: not in reality being able to say, his only answer was, '*the fact is, I never shall be able to get anything out of my mother, as long as I am on terms with you!*'

"Against this there was of course no appeal—time passed on, and having received his strict orders not to presume to go to London, which was within an hour's drive, she did as she was desired; till one day, her amiable husband having announced his intention of honouring her with his company at dinner, she waited till nine o'clock, when one of his grooms brought a letter from him, stating that he was dangerously ill. His wife believing this, set off for town, whereupon, arriving at his house thus unexpectedly, she found not the invalid she expected, but unequivocal proofs of her husband's new and guilty *liaison*.

Indignant and disgusted at the falsehood and wickedness of his whole conduct, she remained in town that night, and wrote him a letter, couched in pretty strong language, that is, calling him by the names he deserved—which, among the well-regulated portion of society whose words are always irreproachable, let their deeds be what they may, is, I believe, considered an unpardonable offence in a wife.

"Now mark the sequel. Upon the receipt of this *violent letter*, the husband went to a very distant relative of his wife's, (for as he used to tell her in a manly and honourable manner, she had neither father, nor brother, and therefore was completely in his power,) and to this relation he declared upon oath, (though the whole world knew to the contrary,) that it was false about his having a mistress; and that the violence of his wife's temper made it impossible for him to live with her! That he merely wished the separation to be temporary, as a short time might bring her to her senses. He then artfully proceeded to give her credit for every possible good quality—temper excepted—which was strange, as he had been for years in the habit of saying that he did not give her as much credit as others did, for the goodness and equanimity of her temper, as *he* considered it merely constitutional. However, it suited his purpose at this juncture that she should be a termagant, and, accordingly, such he declared her—adducing, as proofs of his assertion, the letters of an outraged and injured wife, who, after years of devotion and endurance found, or rather knew herself, and her children, to be turned out of their home, to make way for an abandoned woman, and to save an adulterer the expense of two establishments. Of this *she* was at the time fully aware; and events have proved the truth of her information. But her relation being a man of strict integrity and chivalric honour himself—though withal of a north-pole temperament, and a great respecter of the *commérage de société*, and cucumber conveniences of marital authority, did not conceive that there could be any appeal from the solemn word of honour of a *soi-disant gentleman!*—and therefore gave implicit credence to the husband's statement; negociating the whole business much after the fashion of the worthy Scotch professor, who, being disturbed in the solution of his problems, by a company of cats

that held a concert under his window, threw up the sash, and in the most gentlemanlike and gentle manner, addressed them, as he would have liked himself and his family to have been accosted, by the civil appellations of ladies and gentlemen—accompanied by an equally courteous request, that they would choose some other scene of action, and not molest him.

"Strange to say, this well-bred and pacific line of conduct had not the slightest effect upon his feline tormentors; which induced him to proceed to what *he* thought a very strong and decisive measure; which was, again opening the window, and in a clear and sonorous voice, reading the riot act to them; but, *mirabile dictu!* this also was unavailing; and the poor professor might have been suffering from their persecution till now, had not a friend opportunely come in, and fired a pistol amongst them; which produced more effect than all the learned gentleman's bland remonstrances.

"What chance then had mere truth, simplicity, and good intentions, on the part of this distant relation, against the subtle and serpent-like craft of the clever and unprincipled husband?—who, to the depravity and pliancy of the most abject intrigue, united the vaunting of the most lofty hypocrisy—which, by placing his conduct beyond the reach of investigation, enabled him to stalk triumphantly through the world on the stilts of falsehood. Hopeless of redress from virtuous imbecility on the one side, and clever villany on the other, the poor wife grew desperate, and refused to sign the forced and degrading deed of separation; but into this she was soon compelled by her husband, who, while he was all blandness and apparent fairness to others, the attorneys, &c., wrote her the most intimidating and brutal letters—again reminding her that she had neither father nor brother, and that she had no redress, there being but one law for a woman on such occasions—a law which no woman of the slightest delicacy or feeling would or could resort to. Here, then, *his* every point was gained;—and *her* last struggle was, to remain in her house a few weeks longer, and join in society, that her separation from her husband might not be confounded with that of a notoriously bad character, which had taken place at the time, on very disgraceful grounds.

"This the husband agreed to, adding, with his usual crafty plausibility, to her relative and the attorneys, that whatever redounded to his wife's respectability must conduce to his.

"So much for his words, while his actions were to try by every underhand means possible to prevent her being noticed by any one.

"She went with her children to a miserable and secluded village in Wales; there she remained for two years; her dear friends in London, of course forgetting her with all possible expedition, and thinking it expedient to join forces with her husband; he being a rising man, who kept a good *chef*, gave political dinners and agreeable *soirées* to the most agreeable and notorious demireps in London. As for his immoralities—'fellow feeling' of course made them 'wondrous kind' on that score; and for certain meannesses and brutalities, which the world, bad as it is, does not and cannot openly countenance, a few colossal and skilful falsehoods soon gilded them into positive virtues or venial errors. Meanwhile his poor wife, added to the great and deep wrongs she had to bear, was surrounded by coarseness and vulgarity, which, while the miserable stipend her husband allowed her, compelled her to endure, the habits of her life and her own natural refinement made almost unendurable. Still there were her children, and in looking forward to what they would be, from feeling justly proud of what they were, she endeavoured to forget the past, by living in the future; and the whole neighbourhood vying with each other in kindness and attention to her, enabled her in some degree to wade through the present. But at length the difficulty of getting masters, and the vulgarity of the *locale*, induced her, for her children's sake, to return to England, and settle about two days' journey from London. This so infuriated her husband, who dreaded the truths that might transpire by her returning so near her former ground, and which her absence and his diplomatic falsehoods had so successfully lulled to sleep, that he resolved upon the last cruelty and outrage in his power to inflict, that of tearing her children from her; but not having a single thing to bring against her, this required even more than his usual caution and plausibility; for though the law of the land gives a father, however openly and notoriously

profligate in his conduct and careless of their interests, unalienable power over the persons of his children, yet the law of opinion always exacts certain dues, which, if not acceeded to in *truth*, must be evaded by falschood.

"Accordingly, his first pretext was, that he could not leave his children with her until he knew *where* she intended to live.

"Of course, had he really cared for his children, the *person* they were with, and not the *place* they were in, would have been the source of his anxiety; but, being a thorough-going Whig, *place* was naturally his only object. When informed of his wife's intended residence, he expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and said he thought it a very good place, and that he had no objection.

"Here, then, every one would have supposed the matter ended, and she was to have her children; but no—next followed a set of frivolous vexations, and impossible-to-accede-to stipulations, which were—that if he allowed them to remain with her, she must never go out anywhere, as she had gone out more than *he* approved of in Wales, and had not devoted herself sufficiently, according to his notions, to her children. This from such a father, to such a mother, was a little too much. The next stipulation was, that she must neither live in lodgings, nor at an hotel, nor in the house with anybody else. Now this latter stipulation he knew to be impossible; for from the miserable pittance he allowed her, while spending thousands on his own vices, had it not been for the kindness of friends, who permitted her to live with them, she could not have lived at all according to her sphere of life.

"This last piece of petty tyranny—even the attorney who, in the first instance, had so mismanaged the business and played so completely into the husband's hands, advised her by no means to submit to. Nor did she—for well she knew that, arbitrary and degrading as the terms were, had she complied with them to the letter, it would not have prevented his exercising the brutal but legal power of taking them from her at a moment's warning; consequently she steadily and indignantly refused to do so.

"After some time, she wrote an imploring letter to him, entreating him not to crown all her other inju-

ries, by persisting in this most cruel and insupportable of all, and begging him to remember, that a time must come when the reflection of not having done *all* the wrong in his power, would be a source of far greater satisfaction to him than the remembrance of all his triumphs, whether merited or the reverse.

"To this, his only reply was a letter of the most brutal upbraiding; this was an autograph, but was soon followed by one from a low attorney, who was in the habit of chicaning him through his elections, stating that her husband would allow her children to be within ten miles of her, and that she might have free access to them, provided she would give a solemn promise never to attempt to remove them, and a written document expressing her gratitude for his consideration of her feelings evinced in this arrangement. It is needless to say that this was also rejected with scorn, excited to madness by thus having every injury cemented with insult. Upon hearing that he solemnly denied ever having personally ill-used her, she wrote to his mother, (who had first investigated, and then screened him through every stage of his misconduct,) because upon one occasion of greater outrage than usual, she had gone to that unprincipled mother; and in that letter she taxed him with the falsehood of his assertion, and told her that as she wanted nothing from her—for that she would rather beg her own and her children's bread, than owe it to her—she could venture to tell her the truth.

"This was of course made an additional handle against her; and her jesuitical husband gained fresh ground and applause among his own clique, by giving out that he could not allow his children to remain with a woman who had insulted his mother; though in reality the children were taken six months before that letter was written: but then the mother was rich, and he has beggared his wife; and besides, as he justly observes, she has neither father nor brother. But this is a well-judging world—for it always concludes that might is right. And now behold this once-devoted, all-enduring, and over-generous wife, guiltless of all, save having 'loved not wisely, but too well.' With her heart torn up by the roots, when her children were torn from her, and with them of course the last lingering feeling she might have had for their father—deprived of her position in society, and cast unpro-

tected and unprovided for according to her rank in life, upon the world—obliged to write, in order to provide the common comforts she had been accustomed to; and if she sometimes subsides into calm, every feeling is harrowed up by receiving a dun for some bill of her husband's mistress, who not only has usurped her home, but her name. What wonder, then, that her pen is sometimes dipped in gall? Yet, the world, who never troubles itself about the truth of anything, is always ready to exclaim, (especially those virtuous ladies, who while they are dishonouring their indulgent lords, never perform a single wifely duty,) how very wrong of a wife ever to write at her husband; though the better and more respectable portion of society wonder at nothing, when they know the provocation; besides, the reaction of so much forbearance is always in extremes, just as the sweetest wine makes the sharpest vinegar; but women being considered by men as nonentities in the scale of creation, are not allowed to have, or at least to express, any feelings of indignation, let them have sustained what injuries and outrages they may; whereas, were a tinker or a chimney-sweep wronged but a hair's breadth by his fellow man, and that man were a monarch, could the former get up a revolution to avenge his quarrel, he may chance to take the monarch's place, and at all events descends a ready-made hero to posterity; but wo betide the woman who has

> 'The will to do, the soul to dare,
> The sparkling glance soon blown to fire
> Of ardent love, or headlong ire;'

unless, indeed, she has been the heroine of a disgraceful and disgusting trial, and is the tool of a political faction—then her profligacy and its triumphs may attain to masculine immunities, and a political party may be organized to force her again upon society, even against the ordinary rules of its Tartuffe code, which has adopted for its principle

> 'Pécher en secret n'est pas pécher,
> Ce, n'est que l'eclât qui fait le crime;'

But if she be only 'sinned against,' not sinning, it is thought particularly shocking if she does not submit to every speices of tyranny, insult, and injustice without a murmur; and for half the women in the world

who are content to attain their petty and ignoble ends, by low cunning and small craft, silent submission is a sort of Fortunatus's cap; but I, who believe intellect to be epicine, also believe that these women, who, like Coriolanus, have natures

'. . . . too noble for the world;
That would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for his power to thunder. Their heart's their mouth:
What their breast forges, that their tongue must vent;
And being angry do forget that ever
They heard the name of death.'

"If it be true, and that it is, I for one have no doubt, 'Que tout les beaux pensées vien du cœur,' it must be from the heart that esteem proceeds, and therefore mere intellectual pre-eminence, unpoised by the ballast of moral excellence, can never command it. It is easy for the world, who view the phantasmagoria of life as they do that of a magic lantern, looking merely to the delusive effects produced by certain ugly and invisible machinery, to be dazzled and deceived by brilliant talents; but the poor drudges condemned to the care and display of the fantoccini may not be quite so charmed; and that country must be an immoral one, where the mirage of a man's public life is allowed to cast a sanctifying vapour over the plague-spots of his private character, which is treated as an Eleusinian mystery, and seems to be defended by the all-powerful μυστηρια, that threatens nothing short of death, or divine vengeance, if revealed. As a case in point, the husband I have been telling you about, made his debut as a father, by turning his first child out of the house the moment it was born, saying that he would not have his wife's time and affection monopolized by any d———d child. Yet, this very man gets up upon a hustings and speaking of the poor laws, makes the following beautiful and benevolent peroration:—

"'And above all I am opposed to that peculiar vice in the present system, which, contrary to all the nearest and dearest ties of nature, and the honest rights of humanity, would separate a man, often towards the painful decline of life, from the partner who has shared all his trials, and from the children who have been, perhaps, the solitary sources of comfort and hope, that a long career of labour has enjoyed.' Now the mob who heard this no doubt thought it exquisite,

and that Howard the philanthropist was a Nero to their worthy member; but no one can be surprised that his wife and a few more, who knew *les dessous des cartes*, smiled with disgust, and thought as Miss Biddy Fudge did about that most amiable of scoundrels Jean Jacques,"

'Alas! that a man of such exquisite notions,
Should send his poor brats to the Foundling, my dear.'

"Julia! it is a similar crisis I dread for you. Fancy yourself rewarded for your years of forbearance and endurance, by having your child torn from you —could you bear it?"

"I answer for you, that you could not; and that the same energy, which now enables you to bear and to conceal, would then excite you to resist and to expose; but my fears outstrip probability. You have a father, and you have brothers; and the case I have alluded to will, I trust, remain as it now is—unique.

"Still, vague and sickening apprehensions crowd through my heart, when I think what may be; for a man that indulges in acts of personal violence towards his wife must of necessity have recourse to so many falsehoods, and so much meanness, to retain his position in the world's opinion, that time infallibly obliterates even the shadow of respect which every virtuous woman wishes and tries to feel for her husband, be that husband what he may; and it is this stage of your married life that I dread; for the lady whose history I have just detailed to you I have known these ten years; and no two human beings ever differed more widely from each other, than that woman does now from her former self.

"When first I knew her, she was gay, happy, and confiding; 'with eyes that seem'd to love whate'er they looked upon.' Now she knows no alternations but despair and frenzy; and the greatest proof of friendship any one could evince towards her, would only make her ask, 'I wonder how soon they'll turn upon me?'

"There is something fearful in the breaking of a woman's heart. Her struggles against fate are so exhausting, yet so fruitless—her hopes of redress so impossible,—as well might a poor wretch, laden with irons in a condemned cell, when a prison was on fire, hope or attempt to escape merely by his own crip-

pled exertions, or by appeals to stone walls for mercy, as woman attempt to resist man's tyranny, when he chooses to exercise it.

"When I think of these things, I fear that you must almost hate our whole sex, for the sake of one. And I scarcely have courage to offer you a friendship, which time and circumstances alone can convince you is as pure, as warm, and as generous as your own heart at present.

"I feel that it's only test must be negatives; that it will be evinced, not by what I do, but by what I abstain from doing. And oh! should that blessed time ever come, when you may demand more active and substantial proofs of it, you shall find that the word impossible does not exist for me.

"Who can tell when the hidden and fragile threads that hold our destinies may break? Should mine snap first, you and your child will inherit all I possess. If we may not share it now, it will still be a bond between us, to think that what is mine will be yours.

"I was told last night, by that young bear Charles Dinely, that my poor uncle Cheveley was going fast. He was in every respect the antipodes of my mother —being gloomy, misanthropical, and morose. I have not seen him since I was fourteen, when unfortunately I offended him mortally; for while playing battledore in the library, the shuttlecock happened to fall upon his nose, when he was hear—hearing over one of Lord Grey's speeches. That very night saw me safely returned to my mother, with many dark prophecies concerning my future state, which were anything but flattering to her hopes or my vanity.

"Disgusted, as I am, with the profligate, personal, and pyretic tone of politics in the present day, I shall not be sorry to be removed from the Commons' House; which, instead of representing the people, as they profess to do, in reality only represent the minister, whose tools they are; for were they the faithful stewards of the interests of their country, the careful checks on the administration of its finance, and the honest and incorruptible advisers of the executive branch of its legislature, I doubt whether they would dabble in or countenance that political alchemy, which can transmute the same measure that was vituperated as destruction to the country when brought

forward by one minister, into its salvation when resorted to as a *pis aller* by his successor.

"To conquer this corruption is next to impossible, as long as the people delegate legislative power to pauper representatives, who, though they make their interests the stepping-stone, have in reality only their own individual advancement in view; and though no one can deny that occasionally bright and glorious characters have arisen from out the people themselves, who, in spite of the general corruption and depravity of the times in which they lived, have manifested the superior influence of integrity and wisdom, yet it would be, or rather it is, unwise for the people of England to trust their fate to the chance of such luminaries often arising, instead of establishing their liberties and properties on the only sure foundation, which was the original intention of the constitution to create, namely, a strict relation between themselves and the House of Commons, and then they would not be the dupes of those splendid legislative clap-traps, bated with popular fallacies, which enable their leaders so successfully to betray the public interest, while they appear to succumb to and be actuated by public opinion. However, I foresee that the Repeal of the Union will soon supersede, as a matter of dispute, excitement, and tergiversation, the Catholic Question and the Reform Bill; and upon this question, it is most likely the present ministry will totter to their fall. But enough of politics—though the happiness of writing to you, next to that of conversing with you, gives an interest to any subject which may be the means of prolonging that happiness. Forgive me, then, if I have in this instance been selfish enough to gratify myself at your expense. Knowing, as I do, the unselfishness of your nature, I cannot but prophesy much happiness to you in your sister's fate; for a more amiable, honourable, or high-minded fellow than Saville does not exist; and there is a sufficient difference in their characters, and unity in their *principles* and *opinions*, to insure their mutual welfare; for while too great a sameness of disposition invariably produces ennui in married life, yet opposite principles and opinions, as invariably produce dissensions or something worse: and principles being things with very deep and tenacious roots, no one possessing them cares to eradicate them; so the uttermost a woman

can do, (whose part it is always to yield,) is to suppress or control them: and at even this is not to be done *per saltum*, but by degrees, the danger is that she may retrograde often, and weary eventually in the task.

"As friends, Saville's and my sympathy ceases. Hitherto, every thought of my heart has been bared to his inspection; but now that I have but *one* thought, and that thought is *you*, it must be veiled from all beholders; besides, out of *small* things, there is no such thing as sympathy; for even though people know *all* that you do, they do not know it *as* you do: and even though they feel *for* you, they cannot feel *with* you. As well might a chameleon expect the eyes that looked upon it to change their colour every time it changed its hues, as expect any other heart to sympathize with all the shades of feeling that checker our own.

"But in *our* case—ah, Julia! how I love that little word, which, in spite of fate itself, unites us—in our case, what could we hope from friends but frowning displeasure—liberal donations of advice rendered formidable by a *chevaux de frise* of prudence, to which we never could hope to attain?

"With regard to your dear, dear self, individually, I cannot think, without torture, and it is not to oppress and disturb you more than you already are, but to nerve and prepare you, that in this letter I have so often urged you to turn your thoughts to the future, which, impossible as it now seems to you, *may* be worse than the present. For what cannot want of feeling, and want of principle, when combined with power, craft, and hypocrisy, accomplish? Indeed, when exercised against a wife, *power* is sufficient. 'For,' as Sir Thomas Baker says, speaking of Anne Bullen, 'who knows not that nature is not more able of an acorn to make an oak, than authority is able of the least surmise to make a *certainty?*' Whenever this, by me much-dreaded crisis should arrive—O *then*, Julia, remember that in me you will have a staunch, a devoted, a considerate friend; and objectionable and unavailing as such friendship may *now* appear, it may yet be able to fulfil its whole and sole end, *your* welfare. God, the disposer of all things, alone knows what the ever-changing and shifting scenes of life may next bring forth; but I do think, that even in this world, He does not suffer wrong always to prevail; nor those whom He chasteneth to

be tried beyond their strength; 'but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape.'

"In Him then, in whom you have all along trusted, *still trust.* I dread ending this letter; for in sealing it, I shall feel as if I were sealing our fate—that all is ended—that our last words are spoken. But what are words? They are but the body of thought, which *is* the soul. Many may have loved as deeply, (though I doubt it,) but none ever loved as purely as I do. Could it be otherwise, when it is *you* I love? O Julia! my heart has become a well of deep, deep love for you: and thoughts of you, like stars above it, are the only images it reflects. What, then, can sully the purity of its waters, or dim the hope, the fervency, and the sincerity, with which I shall now and ever say,

"God bless you!

"AUGUSTUS MOWBRAY."

As soon as Mowbray had enclosed and sealed this letter, he placed it within the leaves of that most exquisite little volume, M. de Saintine's "Picciola," which he had promised to lend Lady de Clifford; and again carefully sealing that up, he rang for Sanford, and ordered him to give it to her maid, with his compliments, to know how she was.

No sooner was it fairly gone, than he paced the room restless and dissatisfied with all he had said, and still more with all he had left unsaid. Alternately he reproached himself with not having more improved the only opportunity that might ever occur of writing to Julia, by wasting so many words upon indifferent subjects—and immediately after, felicitated himself upon having resorted to the only expedient by which he could have ventured to prolong his letter. But who ever yet wrote such a letter, and was satisfied with what they had written? for is not love

> ——— "all made of fantasy,
> All made of passion, and all made of wishes;
> All adoration, duty, and observance;
> All humbleness, all patience, and impatience;
> All purity, all trial, all observance;"

in short, all contradictions?

At length, exhausted with fatigue, both of mind and body, Mowbray flung himself upon the bed, but was too feverish and dispirited to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

"Patience, unmoved, no marvel though she pause;
They can be meek that have no other cause.
A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;
But were we burden'd with like weight of pain,
As much or more we should ourselves complain."

SHAKSPEARE.

"Though you have tried that nothing's borne
With greater ease than public scorne,
That all affronts do still give place
To your impenetrable face;
That makes your way through all affairs,
As pigs through hedges creep with theirs;
Yet as 'tis counterfeit and brass,
You must not think 'twill always pass."

HUDIBRAS.

"No thread of candour woofs her web of wiles."

BYRON.

THE morning after Madame d'A.'s ball, the dowager Lady de Clifford was sitting before her toilet-table, upon which were ranged, not indeed

"Twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt,"

but a pile of war-novels—a species of literature in which her ladyship much delighted and often indulged. At the other side of the table were two sets of teeth, the Elizabethan ruff she had worn on the preceding night, and a green fan. Frump was busily employed brushing her mistress's hair, who was as busily employed reading "The Star of Fashion," by Anthony Frederick Holstein, when a knock came to the door.

"Frump, Frump! see who's there," said her ladyship, throwing her handkerchief over the false teeth.

Frump opened the door, at first cautiously, but seeing that it was Lord de Clifford, opened it widely as she said, "It's Lord de Clifford, my lady."

"O come in, my dear; I did not think you'd have been stirring so soon after the ball last night, which, by-the-by, I thought *raustly* stupid."

"D——n the ball!" said he, throwing himself into a chair, folding his dressing-gown about him, and then his arms, as he frowned at Frump and his mother, as much as to say, "Tell her to go away."

"You may go, Frump," said her ladyship, taking the hint, "and I'll ring when I want you."

Long practice had rendered this amiable lady as skilful in detecting her son's changes of humour and impending storms, as the Chinese are in foreseeing change of weather, from the variations of colour in their stone man near Vuchen, on the top of the hill of Vangkiu.

"What is it, my dear?" inquired she, as soon as Frump had closed the door.

"O that d——d woman pretends that I have hurt or put her wrist out of joint, because I just touched her last night for answering me impertinently."

"Which—who—my dear?"

"Why Lady de Clifford. Not that I'd care what the d—l she said; only in a place of this sort, everything gets about, and one does not like to be talked of."

"Very just observation, my dear; but how did it happen?"

"Why last night, instead of going for some books I asked her for, she very impertinently pointed to where they were; and I struck her hand, but in a way that could not have hurt a fly; and yet she has made a perfect uproar about it, by going to bed, and sending for a doctor; and that d——d maid of hers has belled about through the hotel, that she will never be able to use her hand again."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* that you were so mild under such terrible provocation; but it would have been more prudent in this ill-natured world, where things are so misrepresented, if you had not touched her; but you see, my dear, you are too open and candid; but, as I always tell you, you would be so much happier and freer in every way living *eng gorsong*, and when we return to England we must see and contrive it. And the little *gurl* might be sent to school, as I think it's giving her mother too much power to leave her with

her; but all this is for future consideration—the thing is now to decide upon what we had best do. Let me see," continued she, putting two fingers of her right hand against her withered cheek, and the other two on her chin, as was her wont when constructing a falsehood or a plot—"let me see—the best plan will be for you and me both, to be very civil and attentive to her, and to be loud in our regrets to every one in the house, about Lady de Clifford's accident: be sure, my dear, not to forget to call it 'accident'—never say 'hurt.'"

"You are quite right, my dear ma'am, but you *are* so clever—I never knew such a head for business in my life; it's a d—l of a bore, but do you think I had better go down to her now?"

"No, my dear—you had better let me pave the way by seeing her first, and in order to do so, I'll write her a note, to ask when she will see me."

"I'm sure, my dear ma'am, you are extremely kind, and I feel greatly obliged to you—and, as you say, it would be much better if I could get rid of her altogether; but you see there is so much cant in the world, that it requires great skill and caution in managing it."

"Very just observation, my dear, but—" here another knock came to the door.

"Who's there?" cried the dowager sharply.

"It's only me, my dear mamma," wooed Mr. Herbert Grimstone, through the keyhole, "who wish to know how you are after the fatigues of last night?"

"O, come in, my dear."

And in Mr. Herbert Grimstone came, after having imprinted a gallant kiss on his mother's skinny hand, and told her, that after her appearance and the sensation she created the night before, he no longer doubted the description of Queen Elizabeth's beauty as given in the chronicles! he turned to his brother with

"Well, my dear fellow, and how are you?"

"Sadly plagued, my dear, about this here tiresome business," said his mother, answering for him.

"What business?" asked Herbert.

Here followed a false and garbled statement of poor Julia's disjointed wrist, which when he had heard, Mr. Herbert Grimstone, after his usual preliminary grasp of the five hairs on his right temple—with the extend-

ed palm and whole five fingers of his right hand, affectionately turned first to his mother and next to his brother, with

"Well, my dear ma'am—well, my dear De Clifford, what do you wish me to do? I'll be guided entirely by you. Shall I go to Julia and tell her that you can't possibly live with her after such conduct—eh?"

"O, my dear fellow, I'm sure you're very kind," said Lord de Clifford, taking Herbert's extended hand, "but—"

Here their amiable mother interrupted this *nobile fratrum* to explain her plan on the occasion, of which Mr. Herbert Grimstone approved as highly as his brother had previously done, and then said,

"Perhaps, then, I had better go down and sit with her and tell her about the ball—that will look affectionate and attentive, and all that sort of thing; and if she hints at my brother having struck her, I can reason with her, and tell her how much better it will be for her to say nothing about it, but pass it off as an accident."

"Very just observation, my dear."

"But as I before said, my dear *mamma*," resumed Herbert, "I am quite ready to do whatever you and my brother wish. By-the-by, my dear fellow, I had a letter from Protocol this morning, and if Denham remains at St. Petersburg, I have no doubt of being appointed Secretary of Legation. One of his daughters would be a devilish good speculation—one could but be refused, you know, and it would be an epoch in one's life even to have been *near* getting forty thousand pounds. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ah, so it would," replied his brother, "but it would be a better speculation still if you succeeded, for I have no doubt of Denham's ultimately being premier."

"At all events," said Herbert, "I know his intention is to return to England at the next favourable crisis, and try to be Minister for Foreign Affairs."

"But what the deuce will Lord Melford do with Protocol? for after thirty years' tenacious adherence to office, through the most sudden chances, and extreme changes, I should think he would not be easily ousted or transferred," said Lord de Clifford.

"True, but you see Denham calculates upon the friendship and influence of a certain illustrious lady,

and if that influence really exists to the extent he believes, Protocol, nor even Melford himself dare scarcely run counter to it. As things are likely to turn out, I am deuced sorry that I did not from the first pay more attention to the rising sun, and boldly adopt a more decidedly radical line of politics; but then you see, as long as Shuffleton's interest was unshaken, one did not well know what to do."

"Tut, tut, tut, my dear," cried his mother, placing her hand upon Herbert's arm, "don't talk of being radical; you know, as I always say, I'm a Tory—I think it's what all landed proprietors ought to be."

"Very true, my dear mamma," replied Herbert laughing, and again gallantly kissing his revered parent's hand, "and when I am a landed proprietor I'll be a Tory too, or anything else you please."

Now, fond as her ladyship was of the term "landed proprietor," as applied to the first person singular, she had a mortal dislike to the remotest allusion to the reversion of landed property, and therefore instantly changed the subject by saying to her sons,

"Well, my dears, you had better go now, for I must write this here tiresome note to Lady de Clifford."

Rejoiced at the command, the brothers did not "stand upon the order of their going," but "went at once." As soon as they had departed their mother sat down and wrote the following affectionate little note to her daughter-in-law.

"Dear Madam,

"I much regret hearing of the bad accident which you met with, and which prevented our having the pleasure of seeing you at the ball last night. I hope, my dear madam, you instantly sent for medical advice, as the money given to doctors is, I am sure, the *d'argent* de Clifford grudges least. I am sorry not to be at Blichingly now, that I might send you some game, as being able to supply our friends with game is the greatest pleasure we landed proprietors have. Should it be agreeable to you, I will do myself the pleasure of going to sit with you this morning; you see by this offer of going into your room I treat you quite *en famille*, but I think the less ceremony among friends, the better.

"I remain, my dear Madam, yours truly,

"E. B. B. de Clifford."

Who could be critical as to *l'eloquence de billet*, where there was so much affection and sincerity as in the foregoing note? Hannah Moore used to say, "that letters between relations should be a sort of family newspaper;" now the Dowager Lady de Clifford's epistolary effusions were so far on this model that they might have passed for *jeu d'esprits* extracted from the Kentuckly Gazette, or Boston Transcript. As soon as she had sealed the amiable note in question, with yellow wax and a large broad seal, containing, by way of motto, in corpulent old English letters, the word "L'Amitié," surrounded by a wreath of sunflowers, Frump was rang for, and it was despatched. Poor Lady de Clifford, who had passed a feverish and painful night, had just awoke about noon from an opium sleep, and found her sister and her child sitting by her bedside, the latter with her little cheek leaning on her mother's hand.

"Dear mamma," said she, as soon as she perceived she was awake, "how did you hurt your other poor hand, that it is so tied up? besides, I know that you must have been very ill, for Berryl would not let either Tiney or Joe into the room, and, poor little things, they have been moaning so all the morning up stairs."

"Yes, how did you hurt your hand, dear?" asked Fanny, as she stooped to kiss her sister's burning cheek.

"I scarcely know," said Lady de Clifford, pressing Fanny's hand, and looking towards Julia, as much as to say, "Don't ask me before her;" and before Fanny had time to ask any further questions, Berryl entered with Mowbray's parcel.

"Mr. Mowbray's compliments, to know how you are this morning, my lady," said Berryl, handing it to her; and is your ladyship well enough to see Mr. Herbert, who is at the door?"

"Yes—no—that is," said Lady de Clifford, pushing "Picciola" under the pillow, "my compliments to Mr. Mowbray, I am better this morning; but I am really not well enough to see Mr. Grimstone."

Berryl delivered this answer; whereupon the affectionate Herbert put his head in at the door, and said in a voice like honey spread on velvet—

"My dearest Julia! I am grieved beyond measure to hear of your sad accident; and you have no idea

the state my brother is in about you. Is there anything on earth I can do for you ?"

"Shut the door, Berryl," said Fanny, affecting not no hear the voice from the honeycomb, though in reality feeling the sting of its hypocrisy; "the draught is too much for Lady de Clifford."

As one of kindness was the only office Mr. Herbert Grimstone had no ambition to fill, so it was the sole one from which he had no reluctance to retire; therefore he pocketed Miss Neville's affront, and withdrew; but he had scarcely done so, before the door was assailed with another knock. It was Frump, with the dowager's note.

"*I'ill* thank you, Mrs. Frump, if you please," said Berryl, sharply, as she took the note, "not to knock in such an *obstropolus* manner, when *my* lady *his hill*."

"*Missus* wants a *hanser*, if you please, *mum*," said the plebeian Frump, without taking the slightest notice of the aristocratic Berryl's reproof.

"Open it, dear, will you?" said Lady de Clifford to Fanny, as soon as the note was brought to her; "who is it from ?"

Miss Neville made no other answer than by reading it aloud in old Lady de Clifford's voice and manner, though her gravity nearly gave way when she came to the *d'argent*. When she had finished it, she turned to her sister and said, "Well, my dear madam, what do you mean to do ?"

"You know I must see her," groaned Julia, "so I suppose the sooner I get it over the better. My compliments, Berryl, and I shall be ready to see Lady de Clifford whenever it suits her convenience; and Julia, darling, go with Berryl; she wants to get you ready to go out."

No sooner were the sisters left alone, than poor Lady de Clifford gave way to a flood of tears.

"Fye upon you, sister mine," said Fanny, throwing her arms round her neck, and hiding her own tears by mingling them with her sister's, "how can you let such a set of contemptible reptiles sting and wrong you to death in this way? A woman with your mind and your sense should be above it, and beyond them. Were I you, or even were I in your place, being only what I am, which is not to be compared with you by a million of worlds, I would neutralize all their venom by sovereign contempt.'

"Ah! Fanny, if you were me, you would do as I do. Reason and mind are strong things, especially in the abstract; but what are they, when opposed to the overwhelming power that springs from the weakness of a broken heart? It is not of my husband's cruelty, his neglect, nor even of the insult of his unconcealed infidelities that I complain, so much as of the crafty, cold-blooded hypocrisy I am eternally called upon to endure; and the junta formed by himself, his mother, and his brother, who are for ever plotting, not only against my present, but my future, peace. At every personal outrage I receive, I am compelled to league against myself, by authenticating falsehoods to screen them. As far as the world goes, this I would gladly do; but to carry the jest so far as to be obliged to appear to them as if I believed their foulest deeds fair, when they choose that I should do so, is a little too much."

"Indeed is it, and too long have you borne it; were I you, I would conceal it no longer, but let them take the consequence of their conduct."

"I should find little redress, I fear, by so doing, for you know the frightful power that is vested in men, and there are certain mean tyrannical natures that always do a greater to justify a lesser wrong."

"Very true," said Fanny, "I am fully aware that all breaches,

> . . . 'though small at first, soon opening wide,
> In rushes folly with a full-moon tide;
> Then welcome errors, of whatever size,
> To justify it by a thousand lies;'

but still, as I said before, if you did not shield that detestable family quite so much, you would fare the better for it: for instance, although you have not said it, I am as convinced as that I am sitting here, that it was some fresh piece of violence on the part of my brutal *beau frère* which has bruised and blackened your hand in that frightful manner, and when his vile old mother comes insulting you with her hypocritical condolences, upon what she is pleased to mystify as your accident, I would boldly tell her that it was no accident, but more of her amiable son's handywork, for which she will no doubt reward and applaud him: brute as he is, I really think him an angel of light, compared to that withered old bale of wickedness."

"My dear Fanny," said Lady de Clifford, shaking her head, "I fear that would do me little good, for there is no redress for a woman, publicly or privately —our sex have no *esprit de corps*, but are, with very few exceptions, so weak and so wicked, as upon all occasions to aid and abet the other sex by countenancing their profligacy and upholding their tyranny and injustice. Were women but true to themselves and to each other, their position as human beings would be widely different from what it now is, and ever must be, while they continue satisfied with being the degraded nonentities they are at present. I am no advocate for the ridiculous and immoral chimera, called the "Rights of Women,"—for they have no rights; at least none that can or ought to empower them to fill those masculine niches in the world, which would authorize them to kill their fellow-creatures as soldiers, cajole them as statesmen, or cheat them as lawyers. A woman's proper and only empire is her home, and unless her nature could be physically changed—that is, unless she could cease to be woman —it never can or ought to be any other; but still there should be some cruelty to animal act, that would extend its protection to her in that sphere. If every man that had been notorious in the violation of his duty and cruelty to one woman, was shunned and contemned by every other on the strength of it, instead of (as is now the case) being not only tolerated, but additionally countenanced, the number of domestic tragedies would sensibly decrease and eventually almost cease to exist. How different is the conduct of men with regard to their own sex! It is neither their imaginary intellectual or their real superiority of physical strength, nor even the laws they themselves have made, which constitutes their omnipotence half so much as the indissoluble manner in which they invariably uphold and support each other; for let them be ever so generous, high-minded, and chivalric in their feeling towards women, yet no sooner do they cabal together, when the injuries of a woman are the mooted point, than some corresponding and sympathetic chord of interest, feeling, vice, passion, or prejudice, is sure to be struck, which induces them to coalesce with those whom they have abstractedly condemned and theoretically opposed."

"All you say, Julia, is but too true; and," added

Fanny musingly, "I wish to goodness I could be an optimist, and then I should have some chance of being content; but it is the diving and doubting that distracts one, and suggesting amendments in one's own mind to certain persons and things, which Providence evidently does not coincide in; as Hume says in one of his dialogues concerning natural religion—'Some small touches given to the brain of Caligula in his infancy might have converted him into a Trajan. One wave a little higher than the rest, by burying Cæsar and his fortunes in the bottom of the sea, might have restored liberty to a considerable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reasons why Providence interposes not in this manner; but they are unknown to us: and though the mere supposition that such reasons exist may be sufficient to save the conclusion concerning the Divine attributes, yet surely it never can be sufficient to establish that conclusion.'"

"Dear Fanny, that was a very natural doubt for David Hume; but I should be sorry if it continued to be yours. I was lately reading a little work of Krummacher's, called 'The Vision of the Night,' which would, I think, satisfactorily answer all your doubts, if indeed the Scriptures have not already done so; and do you not remember, in Isaiah, that cheering promise —'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy upon thee?'"

"Yes," replied Fanny, "that is one among the many assurances amid the words of everlasting life, sufficient to support us through the most galling and perplexing trials, did we but remember them to ponder upon; but unfortunately it is the characteristic of great affliction, to banish every thought but what relates to itself."

"Alas! that is true," said Julia, "since there is even a divine instance of it on record; for our Saviour himself, in the sharpness of his mortal agony, cried out, 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' and in great distress we never can collect or subdue our thoughts sufficiently to remember that our sufferings are God's especial will, which would enable us to submit ourselves to them: but are all too apt to imagine that nothing but desertion of us on the part of the Al-

mighty can account for our persecution, and yet, were our thoughts sufficiently with God to have him always in them, I am convinced this would not be the case."

"Certainly; but do you not, in common with every one else, find that it is the petty envyings, the low hypocrasies, and the small deceptions—in short, the insects of life, that sting and irritate one out of a healthy equanimity of mind? Every great calamity brings with it a certain degree of dignity sufficient for its support; to say nothing of their being of rarer occurrence; and if one might be allowed to choose one's own misfortunes, I think there are few, if any, who would not prefer being torn to pieces by a lion to being stung to death by gnats. For instance, Julia, confess that you find it easier to endure your husband's wholesale ill usage, than the retail attacks of his old wasp of a mother, or the puny buzzings of his gnat of a brother?"

Whatever reply Lady de Clifford might have returned to this last question of her sister's was prevented by a knock at the door.

"Fanny," said the former, turning very pale, "will you see who is at the door, dear?"

"My dear madam," replied Fanny, assuming the dowager's voice, and paddle-like motion of the hands, "I have no doubt it's the wasp coming to pay you the little affectionate visit she threatened; with, I suppose, the laudable intention of assuring you that her son is the best husband in the world."

"Pray," cried Julia, catching her sister's sleeve as she rose to go to the door, "don't leave me if it is her, for I can't bear to be alone with that woman."

"Nor shall you, dear, for *you* don't know how to answer or deal with her."

"Pray, pray, Fanny, for my sake, don't say anything to her."

"I won't," said Fanny, "unless the case should be *very urgent*."

Here another knock compelled Fanny to open the door.

"My dear madam," said the dowager, passing Fanny with a stiff bow, and advancing to the bedside, where poor Lady de Clifford had closed her eyes to shut out so disagreeable a vision, "I'm *raustly* sorry to hear of *this here* terrible accident. I assure you De Clifford has been in a terrible way about it—really

his conduct has been quite lover-like;" here the ancient dissembler threw back her head, paddled her hands, and creaked out one of her Vulpine smiles, which always had an unnatural appearance; for her muscles, albeit unused to the merry mood, seemed rusty and obdurate in the extreme; "and the only thing, my dear madam," continued she, "that at all consoled him, was your having had the prudence to send for a physician. I hope, I am sure, that he's been of service, and that you are not in much pain now."

"Thank you," said Julia, in a low and languid voice, "I am easier now."

"It was vaustly provoking, my dear madam," resumed the dowager, with still more *empressement* and hypocrisy than before, "and we all regretted extremely. De Clifford was quite dull the whole evening, I assure you—that you should have been prevented coming to the ball by this here sad accident."

Fanny, who had been fidgeting about in her chair during the whole of this speech, could keep silent no longer, but said in a clear, distinct, and haughty tone—

"Your ladyship appears to be under some strange mistake about my sister's hand; for she was not hurt by any accident, but by a blow from Lord de Clifford."

Here ensued another rusty smile, another toss back of the head, and more paddling of the hands on the part of the dowager, as she said, turning to Julia—

"You see, my dear madam, gentlemen are so rough in their *bodinawge*,* that they are apt sometimes to do mischief when they least intend it; but," continued she, looking mothers-in-law at Fanny, raising her voice and speaking with increased volubility, as though determined she would not be interrupted, "the worst thing you can do is to let your hand hang down; for I remember once, when my mother hurt her hand, she was ordered not to take it out of a sling for a month. I'll relate you the circumstance:—my mother was a vaustly *sperited* woman, and you must know, Lady de Clifford, it was the fashion in those days for ladies to drive themselves; and one evening she was driving in her phaeton rather late, on her return to Blichingly, across Hounslow Heath, when she was overtaken

* In plain French, *badinage*.

by a highwayman on a very *sperited* horse, in a black mask.* Now my mother being, as I before mentioned, one of the most *sperited* women of her day, never travelled without her pistols—so immediately drawing one, she shot the robber dead, which caused him to fall back in his saddle, and relinquish his grasp of her left hand, which he had tightly seized. Seeing that he was incapable of further resistance, with that wonderful presence of mind which never forsook her, she gave the reins to the groom, and getting out of the carriage, proceeded to search the robber's pockets, in which she found two heavily laden purses, three watches, the miniature of a lady set with brilliants, and a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, a boot hook, a corkscrew, and a toothpick case, all of which she sent to Bow-street the next day, except the corkscrew, which I have now at Blichingly. After this she drove off as fast as possible, and never even mentioned the circumstance till the next morning at breakfast, when, on looking over the *noos*papers, I saw a paragraph headed, 'Wonderful courage of a lady;' and after I had read out the account I have just given you, my mother, (who was breaking a rusk in her chocolate with her right hand, her left being in a sling from the wrench the robber had given it,) said, in as cool a voice as if she had been asking for a cup of tea, 'My dear, that was me. I did not think the circumstance worth mentioning last night.' Oh, she was a wonderful woman, my dear madam, so *vaustly sperited!*"

"Wonderful indeed!" said Fanny, her face buried in her handkerchief, almost convulsed with laughter.

Luckily, at this crisis Berryl entered with some books and a parcel, which she gave to the dowager, who, opening the latter, drew from it a very dingy beetroot-coloured ten-shilling China crape shawl, which she presented to Lady de Clifford, saying—

"My dear madam, here is a *rale Ingeet* shawl I met with the other day, and as you have such *vaustly* good taste in dress, I thought it would be the very thing for you."

After which, with that generosity of spirit which the truly noble-minded always feel, to silence Julia's

* It is to be presumed that it was the man, and not the horse that wore the mask as above stated.—*Printer's Devil.*

† Anglice, Indian.

thanks, she began heaping fresh benefits upon her by adding—

"And here, my dear madam, are some books, which I thought might amuse you, for the novels some years back were much more amusing, and better written, than those of the present day. Let me see, here is a *vaustly* interesting one—'The Innocent Adulteress, and the Humane Assassin;' 'The Handsome Major; or, who the D——l can he be? by a young lady of Fashion;' 'The Fortunate Village Maid; or, Memoirs of the Marchioness of L. V.;' 'Read and find out what it Means;' 'She's off with the Footman; or, Who'd have thought it?'—and here, my dear madam, is a vaustly curious old book, in another style, not exactly a novel," and her ladyship raised her glass, and read out the following tempting bill of fare:—'The Law and Lawyers laid Open; in Twelve Visions, setting forth the Grievances of the Law, and the Remedies proposed; A Description of a Court of Justice; The Trial of Peter Puzzle; Cause Post-poned, and why; A Lawyer and a Catchpole; Identical Trial of Peter Puzzle; Cause resumed; His Crimes and Sentence; A comical Trial of a Piece of a Lawyer, and a Patch of an Author; Tim, the Cozener—his Trial and Abuse of Foreigners, to the Scandal of his Country; On Britannia's Complaint —receives Sentence as the defamed of his Country; The Despairing Judge; Opinion of the Bench on his Case; The Skip turned Bencher; Three Brethren very Fat; North contends for the Chancellorship, which Ends in a Fray; An honest Attorney permitted to speak for himself, is advanced near the Bench; Modesty having a Cause desires to choose her Counsel, and has leave—she rejects a Multitude, and at last pitches on Faz——— and Young K———by; the Grand Question debated, whether an honest Counsel ought to plead a dishonest Cause; Cicero's Speech thereon, and the Result; Jack Ketch's Petition to the Sheriffs; Characters of Sworn Appraisers, and their villanous Usage of unfortunate Tradesmen; The Lawyers being ordered into Cells apart against a new Day of Trial, all the Cells are visited, their Persons described, and their several Employ; to which is added, Plain Truth, in three Dialogues, between Trueman, Skinall, Dryboots, three Attorneys, and

Season, a Bencher'—Oh! it's exceedingly clever, and *vaustly* amusing, I assure you!"

"So I should think," said Julia and Fanny, in the same breath, and again obliged to have recourse to their pocket-handkerchiefs. Delightful and intellectual as the conversation had been, it was beginning to flag, when the door leading into the drawing-room opened, and Lord de Clifford advanced, and after having announced to his mother that breakfast was ready, folded his arms, and turned to his wife, though scarcely looking at her, said, in an exhilarating tone of voice, 'Well, my dear Julia, I hope you are better. Have you had your breakfast yet, or shall I send you in some?'

"O dear," said the dowager, rising, "it is time you and I, Miss Neville, should go, for I hate to interrupt matrimonial *tête-à-têtes*, I think it is so delightful to see them."

"*Cela depend*," replied Fanny; "there may be a *magic* about them sometimes certainly; but when it degenerates into *legerdemain*, I cannot say I admire them," added she, looking indignantly at her brother-in-law.

"Why, d——n it," said he, taking out his watch, "it's half-past one, we'd better all go to breakfast, if we mean to have any to-day."

Lady de Clifford entreated them to do so, and was not sorry for the relief of being left to herself. Upon entering the breakfast-room, they found Saville on the sofa, reading the last Galignani—Mr. Herbert Grimstone standing with his back to the fireless grate, looking at his painfully tight boots more in sorrow than in anger—Mrs. Seymour was working a pair of slippers in one window, while Monsieur de Rivoli was in another, doing a caricature of Lord Charles Dinely, whom Herbert had invited to breakfast, and who was amusing himself by alternately entangling Mrs. Seymour's silks, and shying paper pellets into the gondolas as they passed under the window. Major Nonplus sat alone at a side-table, with a napkin tucked under his chin, and a dish as large as a boat before him of raw oysters, which he was devouring audibly. Reposing for one moment from his labours just as Fanny, Lord de Clifford, and the dowager entered, he exclaimed, with an ungratefully reproach-

ful look at the Xenophon's trophy of empty shells before him—

"Ah," as old Earle the miser used to say, "what capital things oysters would be, if one could but feed one's servants on the shells!"

"Very just observation," responded the dowager.

"Alas! *nulla est sincera voluptas*, Major?" sympathized Saville.

"Which means," replied the latter, again returning to the charge, "no oyster without a shell, I suppose. After all, they are not so bad neither, for without them we'd have none of the sea water."

"Ah oui et apparament vous avez la mer à boir la," cried Monsieur de Rivoli, looking over from his sketch at the innumerable instalments of the Adriatic that the Major was swallowing.

"Pray," said Herbert to his own servant, as he brought in his diurnal mess of prepared cocoa, and one of his homœopathic powders, "is Monsieur Barbouiller, the French gentleman, up yet?"

"He's been gone these two hours, sir," replied the man.

"Gone! and did he leave no message for me?"

"No, sir, only a book, which he said I was to give you."

"O, that is all right," said Herbert, brightening up; and five minutes after, his beloved Timbuctoo was presented to him. He nearly pushed Mrs. Seymour's plate into her lap in his eagerness to search within the ponderous volume for some note or other definitive opinion of the departed critic. But, alas! none greeted him—save at the end of the volume, one small quotation from Martial—

> "Comitetur punica librum
> Spongia, ...
> Non possunt multae una litura potest."

"Stupid ass," exclaimed he, closing the book, and banishing it to the back of his chair, as he resumed his attentions to a piece of dry toast.

"What's the matter, my dear?" inquired his tender mother.

"O nothing, my dear mamma, only French people are either the cleverest or the silliest people in the world."

"I say, old fellow," cried Lord Charles Dinely from the other end of the table, enforcing the appeal by

flinging a piece of roll at Herbert's head, "let us see that petition, or whatever it is, that the man dressed as a sailor gave you last night at the ball, will you?"

"O it's up in my room,—I don't know where it is," said Herbert, pensively running his fingers through his hair."

"Well, send for it, can't you? said Lord Charles, ringing the bell, and himself giving the order, when the servant came.

"I don't know whether this is it or not, my lord," said the man when he returned.

"Here, let's see what it is," said the latter, snatching it off the salver, and then added with a horse-laugh as soon as he had looked at it, "'pon my soul this is capital; hang me if I don't vote for this when I get into Parliament, and I'll make the governor do the same."

"What is it?" unanimously asked the whole party.

"Why, an address to both Houses of Parliament for the suppression of old woman of both sexes!"

Every one laughed except the dowager, who began to lour, till the amiable Herbert gallantly took her hand, and said, with his blandest smile, "I dare say, my dear mamma, it is very funny, and as there are no old women *here* we may venture to read it."

"Come, read it, Herbert," said Lord Charles, throwing it to him.

"I can't I hate reading out—do you read it, Saville?"

"With all my heart," said he and accordingly he read out what will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ADDRESS TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF OLD WOMEN OF BOTH SEXES.

"Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda."
HORAT.

"Ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget,
Aut Fanaticus error, et iracunda Diana."
IBID.

"Old women, priests, and poultry, have never enough."
ITALIAN PROVERB.

My Lords and Gentlemen:—Deeply impressed as I am with the difficulties of the proposition I am about to lay before you, yet a glow of *real* patriotism, equally uninspired by a public dinner, or prompted by the hope of a place in the legislature, impels me without fear (though I can scarcely venture to hope without reproach) to offer to your consideration a few cogent reasons why, in the present session, you should seriously turn attention to the framing of a *Bill for the Suppression of Old Women of Both Sexes.* This is the *real corporate* reform of which the country stands in need, and until these most ancient, most respectable, but most detrimental corporations are "*Schedule A' d,*" the march of intellect is merely wearing out its shoes, performing the goose-step, and reform enacting the part of major-domo in the dust hole, cutting the air, and calling it a victory, as he removes harmless rubbish that is in nobody's way.

In the proposed bill, you, my lords, can have possibly nothing to fear for the safety of *your* "*order;*" nor you, gentlemen of the House of Commons, surely cannot suppose, that in any animadversions uttered against the antiquities of either sex the cap can fit you —as I promise you faithfully it will not be a *mob-cap.*

The late William Cobbett, M. P. for Oldham, that

political mosaic, than whom no individual ever had less of the old woman about him, inasmuch as that the idiosyncrasy of the latter genius is an adamantine adhesiveness to a particular principle or opinion; whereas it is a well-known fact, that the late gridiron Solon scarcely ever broached the same opinions for two consecutive months. The late William Cobbett has in his "legacy to Peel," asked the following questions:—

"1. What will you now do with the House of Commons?

"2. What will you do with Ireland, and particularly with the church of Ireland?

"3. What will you do with the church and the dissenters of England?

"4. On the destructive effects of funds and of paper money in England, France and America.

"5. What will you do with the tax-eaters called pensioners, sinecurists, grantees retired-allowance people, half-pay people, secret-service people, and the like?

"6. What will you do with the crown lands, and with the army, and especially with regard to the punishments in the army?"

These are all important questions, no doubt—very important questions; but there is another still more important question, my lords and gentlemen, to be asked—ay, and to be answered too—

"*What do you mean to do with the old women?*"

And this query I take to be the very nucleus of all those just quoted from the illustrious defunct.

A young gentleman, of equal veracity and vacuity, not long ago miscarried of a pamphlet, in which he tells you that "nothing can be done unless Whigs and Radicals alike see the imperative necessity of being united," never for a moment perceiving (owing to that moral obliquity for which he is so celebrated) how monstrous an issue might be the result of an union between such very near relations; but I tell you that nothing can be done till you see the imperative necessity of suppressing the old women of both sexes.

Before I search through the dim and shadowy light of past ages, amid the chaotic dust of buried empires, for the cause or causes of that supremacy and fiat-like sway which ancient ladies of both sexes seem to hold *jure divino*, or rather *jus civile*, over the affairs of this

nether world, let it be clearly understood what I mean by the term "old woman." Never has it been, nor ever shall it be, employed by me in its vulgar and chronological sense; for there are quite as many octogenarian Ninons in mind as in person. The old women that should come within the pale of the Suppression Bill are like poets—they are born such—not made by any length of time whatever.

It is easy to perceive how the supremacy of the sisterhood has attained to its present colossal force, past ages having evidently awarded to them that precedence which the present seems to deem it sacrilege to dispute. One of the earliest explorers of far countries—that respectable old lady Bushequins—mentions, that in Thebes a very rudely carved female statue had been excavated, playing on an instrument much resembling a viol or modern violin, and bearing marks of almost antideluvian antiquity, which clearly proves that, so far back as before the flood, old women played first fiddle. Nor was heaven itself free from their jurisdiction; for an old Latin poet, in the reign of Tiberius, apostrophises the sun in the feminine gender, imploring her to be merciful in exerting her great influence over the fate of man; so that, allowing the sun to be feminine, even at that stage of the world she must have been a tolerably old lady.

Of the pernicious influence of old women in general, and ancient ladies in particular, there are a thousand instances on record. Alcibiades disfiguered the most beautiful dog in the world, by cutting off his tail, in order to turn the tongues of the Athenian old women from his own defects to those of his dog. The first sycophants that ever existed were also to be found among the old women; for, by the ancient laws of Athens, the exportation of figs was rendered criminal—the Attican figs being remarkably excellent, the Athenians did not choose that any foreigner should have the luxury of eating them. The prohibition was extremely ridiculous, but the Athenians were in earnest. Informers, therefore, were among them called "sycophants," from two Greek words signifying "fig," and "a discoverer."* And the very first informer was an old woman, who, in bleaching yarn on the sea-shore, detected one Glaucus, a fisherman,

* See Plutarch de Curiositate.

lading a vessel bound for Sicily with the forbidden fruit. From thenceforward this laudable office was chiefly monopolized by the Attican crones.

The Romans, on the contrary, though by no means despising Attic information, had, as it is well known, both a personal and political aversion for old women, always excepting Messala, the Roman senator, who married Terrentia, (the widow of Cicero, Sallust, and half a dozen others,) in her extreme old age, merely for the sake of being talked about.

But by the Roman law we find different ages assigned for different purposes—as consular age, or that wherein a person might regularly hold the consulship, which was the forty-third year, so that he might sue for it in the forty-second—where it is to be observed, it was not necessary that either of those years should be expired, but only begun; besides that, men of extraordinary merit towards the republic were in this matter, exempt from ordinary laws: hence Corvinus was consul at twenty-three years of age, Scipio Æmilianus at thirty-six, and Pompey at thirty-five; others broke through the laws by violence, as Caius Marius the younger, and Octavius Cæsar, who procured themselves to be made consuls before twenty years of age.

How different are all these wise juvenilities of the ancients to all our modern antiquities, when no man is deemed fit for high office in the state till he has become superannuated, *alias* an old woman, with the brilliant exception of William Pitt, the ablest statesman that England ever produced, who swayed the helm of state at two-and-twenty—a perfect political infant! And yet, my lords and gentlemen, the greatest enemy his memory and his measures have amongst you, I think, must acknowledge that there was no dentition of intellect apparent at any epoch of his career—nay, his bitterest opponent cannot but confess that he formed an Augustan era for England—for through him "all the world were taxed."

But to return. Among the Romans even judiciary age, or that wherein a person was capable of sitting as judge, was not always the same; for, by the *lex servilia Glauciæ*, none were allowed to be chosen under fifty or above sixty, which is proof positive that sixty was the Rubicon that, once passed, left no escape from old womanism; whereas with us, sixty is

the *toga virilis* that alone fits a man for public life. But even sixty among the Romans was by some other laws set aside, and changed for, and limited to, that of thirty-five, but reduced afterwards by Augustus to thirty; though Piticus supposes a mistake here in the text, and that instead of thirty-five and thirty, it ought to read twenty-five and twenty. Aristotle fixed the military age at seventeen. (Polit. lib. viii.)

The age for holding offices in the city, as *quæstor*, *ædile*, *tribune* of the people, &c., is not determined by the annual laws of Villius, but appears to have been the twenty-seventh year. How different is this from the protracted gestation of civic honours in our degenerate days! Alas!—how often must a worthy alderman of the nineteenth century exert his powers of locomotion, and like

> "Sir William Curtis, late Lord Mayor.
> Remove from this here house to that ere,"

before he can hope to attain to the civic chair! how many nightly vigils must he keep over cheese or china, over beer or bridles, over rubies or red herrings, before he can at the Mansion House

> "Hush'd and satiate lay,
> And chew in dreams the custard of the day!"

We have the experience of all past ages to prove how much the weal or woe of nations depend, upon the capacity, integrity, and judgment of their rulers. But from the undiminished (nay, increased) sway of the old ladies this truth would seem to be totally disregarded.

Dinarchus, in his oration against Demosthenes, has the following passage.—"To what causes, Athenians, is the prosperity or calamity of a state to be ascribed? To none so eminently as to its ministers and its generals. Turn your eyes to the state of Thebes. It subsisted once,—it was once great,—it had its soldiers and commanders. There was a time, (our elder citizens declare it, and on that authority I speak,) when Pelopidas led the 'sacred band;' when Epaminondas and his colleagues commanded the army. Then did the Thebans gain the victory at Leuctra; then did they pierce into the territories of Lacedemon, before deemed inaccessible; then did they achieve many and noble deeds. The Messenians they reinstated in their city, after a depression of four hun-

dred years. To the Arcadians they gave freedom and independence; whilst the world viewed their illustrious conduct with applause.

"On the other hand,—at what time did they act ignobly unworthy of their native magnanimity?—When Timolaus called himself Philip's friend, and was corrupted by his gold; when the traitor Proxenus led the mercenary forces collected for the expedition to Amphissa;—when Theagenes, wretched and corrupt, like this man, was made commander of their band: then did these three men confound and utterly destroy the affairs of that state, and of all Greece. So indisputably true is it, that *leaders are the great cause of all the good and all the evil that can attend a community.* We see this in the instance of our own state. Reflect, and say at what time was this city great and eminent in Greece; worthy of our ancestors, and of their illustrious actions? When Conon (as our ancient citizens inform us) gained the naval victory of Cnidos;—when Iphicrates cut off the detachment of the Lacedemonians;—when Chalcias defeated the Spartan fleet at Maxos;—when Timotheus triumphed at the sea-fight near Corcyra:—then, Athenians, then it was that the Lacedemonians, whose wise and faithful leaders, whose adherence to the *ancient institutions* had rendered them illustrious, were reduced so low as to appear before us like abject supplicants, and implore for mercy.

"Our state, which they had subverted by means of those who then conducted our affairs, once more became the sovereign of Greece; and no wonder, when the men now mentioned were our generals; and Archinus and Cephalus our ministers. For what is the great security of every state and nation? Good generals and able ministers."—*Leland's Demosthenes.*

Now observe, my lords and gentlemen, Dinarchus attributes all the former brilliant achievements, and healthy tone of the Lacedemonian state, first to the wisdom and sound policy of its leaders, who were most assuredly both anti-ancient and anti-feminine; and secondly to an adherence to the '*ancient institutions*' of the country. But mind, he does not say by an adherence to the *ancient ladies.* Pause, then, my lords and gentlemen, before you allow any old woman, or any set of old women to urge you on into the total destruction of *all* the '*ancient institutions*'

of your country. Municipal reform can never avail you, as long as *corporate reform* is still wanting; that is, as long as an influential old woman of either sex is allowed to remain extant.

I am well aware how many Timolauses there are among the Reformers, who, calling themselves Reform's friend, allow themselves to be corrupted by Reform's gold; for there *is* Reform gold, as well as Tory gold, though it must be acknowledged that the former much resembled the sovereigns that General Jackson has in that land of liberty, America, converted into eagles, inasmuch as the great alloy of republican dross it undergoes considerably lessens the sterling value of the legitimate coin.

All such *Timolaus* Reformers will of course be the very first to object to the Corporate, Ancient, Female Reform which I shall propose; and indeed it would be the height of ingratitude in them did they *not* do so;—for it is as clear as noon-day that the first Reformer that ever existed was an old woman! But in making this assertion, let it be understood that I do not mean the slightest personal allusion to My Lord Grey; heaven forbid! I have far too much respect for the order—*his* order I should say. No, I allude to a far more ancient and enterprising old lady, whom, though anonymous, is not for that reason the less celebrated in the well-known nursery epic, beginning—

"There was an old woman tossed up in a blanket
Seventy times as high as the moon;
Where she was going I could not but ask her,
For in her hand she carried a Broom:
Old woman—old woman—old woman, said I,
Whither, ah whither up so high?
To sweep the cobwebs off the sky,
And I'll be with you by-and-bye, by-and-bye.

Now I beg leave to state, that after the most unwearied literary and antiquarian researches, I have discovered that the word *Broom* at the close of the fourth stanza, is in the black letter edition of the "Nursery Anthology," spelt *Brougham;* it is also evident, that cobwebs bear a typical allusion to the celestial poor laws; but notwithstanding the old lady's very sweeping reform, it does not appear that the planetry parishes have ever reaped any advantages

from it, especially Apheta,* who has been in a sextile position nearer the sun ever since: this can only be accounted for by a supposition that when this enterprising and apogeeic old lady had gone up so high, like Astolpho, she went still farther, even to the moon, in search of her reason, and having been much struck (*i. e.* moonstruck) with all she beheld, has remained there ever since, filtering her plans of reform through the reflected rays of the planet she now inhabits, and is still willing (with that philanthropy which first prompted so sublime an enterprise) to give a mouthful of moonshine to every hungry, needy, speculating, adventurous radical, who shall invoke the spirit of Reform as embodied in her from whom it first emanated; come they in the trappings of pauper diplomacy, the Peachum craft of pickpocket patriotism, the foolscap uniform of radico-political pamphlets, or the beer and beefsteak gullability of "Free and Independent Electors."(!) No matter; she has still moonshine enough for them all; and it is quite astonishing how long the latter can subsist upon this light but seemingly nutritive food. The Reform Bill itself, that grand panacea for all earthly ills, social, civil, and political, seems, by-the-bye, to have been framed upon the model of the magical Alracadalera of Serenus Samonicus, preceptor to the younger Gordian, as a charm or amulet for curing agues, and preventing other diseases; to have the effect, the word was to be written on paper and repeated, omitting each time the last letter in the former, that the whole may form a kind of inverted cone, in this manner:—

Alracadabra
Alracadabr
Alracadab
Alracada
Alracad
Alraca
Alrac
Alra
Alr
Al
A

* The name of the planet, which is the giver of life in a nativity.

So that it has this property, that which way soever the letters are taken, beginning from the apex, and ascending from the left to the right, they make the same word, or as some would have it, the same sentiment, as is found in the first whole line; this paper must be suspended round the neck by a thread; but according to Julius Africanus, another ancient writer, the pronouncing the word in the same manner will do just as well. Here then is the whole scheme of the Reform Bill! beginning with a mystical and high-sounding word, becoming gradually less as you examine it, and eventually terminating in schedule A. The magical operation of the whole consisting in and depending on repeating the word, in every possible way, and reiterating it on every possible occasion.

Nobody being more fully aware than I am, my lords and gentlemen, of the feline unkillability of old women of both sexes, I have never for a moment entertained the utopian vision of exterminating them. No, I merely propose to suppress them, and that in the following manner; that all male old women entertaining an overweaning opinion of themselves be forthwith shipped off to Lilliput, in order that then and there they may find their own level, allowing them to travel by steam, that they may have the pleasure of vapouring to the last; that all female old women may in like manner be instantly transported to Brobdignag, in the hope of making them think a little less of themselves, which may perhaps be brought to bear by the time they have had their heads nearly gnawed off, like poor Gulliver, by half-a-dozen Brobdignag babies; but with regard to this "consummation so devoutly to be wished," nothing approximating to certainty can be surmised, as they will be by far the most troublesome part of the cargo; we can only hope that they will not be like the old woman in the Irish song, who, after eloping with his Satanic majesty, was politely returned by him to her sposo, with this very ungallant assertion—

> "What to do with her I cannot well tell,
> For she's not fit for heaven, and won't stay in h—l."

I shall now proceed to give a catalogue *rasionnè* of all the old ladies that should come under the Suppression Act, and as Lindley Murray asserts that "the masculine is worthier than the feminine," the former

shall take precedence. Imprimis—All prime ministers having past the rubicon of sixty, figuring as the hero of a crim. con. All ministers for foreign affairs, adding protocols to embassies in the shape of young gentlemen who are never to be found in the seat of legation; but after a three weeks' residence in any foreign city, spawn a statistical work on the country, filled with errors, platitudes, and loose writing, and abounding in the *ludere cum sacris* of would-be witticism—in short, an androginal abortion, combining all the coarseness of the one sex, with all the weakness of the other. All surgeons knowing no more of anatomy than was surmised by Aristotle. All physicians prescribing *lau medicinal* for the gout; or applying a stethoscope, when called in to attend a complaint in the heart, which, from the throb of the patient's pulse, they ought to know was a love fever. All attorneys compromising their clients' interests by an amiable candour towards the opposite party, which could only be admirable and admissible in a young lady of fifteen. All umpires whose eyes are in their ears, and who consequently detect no more in a case than what they hear from an interested party. All staff officers, who having arrived at "that uncertain thing which certain people call a certain age," conceive the whole duties of their situation to be fulfilled when they have effectually succeeded in representing a centaur by dove-tailing themselves to their saddles and perading through the streets from morning till night. All editors of liberal papers who imagine (however republican the tone of their political articles may be) the community at large can believe either in the independence of their principles, or the uncompromising integrity of their opinions; when they turn to the evidently dining-out style, and lord-and-lady-civility-inspired tone of their reviews of certain books. All husbands who suppose that their wives, like Indian grass, will become the sweeter the more they are trampled upon. All fathers who are continually annoying and disobeying their sons, solely from their ignorance, in not knowing that twenty has more wants, and consequently requires more money, than sixty. All gentlemen who, after fifty, go a step beyond Narcissus, and, not content with being enamoured of themselves, fancy that every one else is so too. All electors, who continue to enact Shacabac, to the Bar-

mecide* feast of reform, set before them at every succeeding election by their representatives. All men, who anticipate their conjugal authority, like Alnaschar; but every one may not remember the story, so I will transcribe the part to which I allude, in the hope of preventing some worthy individuals from undertaking a voyage to Lilliput. Mark how the would-be husband soliloquises.

"When I am with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper hand. I will affect a grave air, without turning my head to one side or the other. I will speak little; and while my wife, as beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her ornaments, I will make as if I did not see her.

"Her women about her will say to me," 'Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant before you. She expects that you would caress her, and is very much mortified that you do not so much as vouchsafe to look upon her. She is wearied with standing so long; bid her sit down.'

"I will give no answer to this discourse, which will increase their surprising grief; they will lay themselves at my feet; and after they have done so a considerable time, begging me to relent, I will at last lift up my head and give her a careless look; afterwards I will return to my former posture; then will they think that my wife is not well enough, nor handsome enough dressed, and they will carry her to her closet, and change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit than before. They will return and hold the same discourse with me as before; *and I will never have the pleasure not so much as to look upon my wife*, till they have prayed and entreated so long as they did at first. Thus I will begin on the first day of my marriage to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life. * * * * * *

"She will certainly complain of my contempt of her, and of my pride, to her mother, the grand vizier's wife, which will rejoice me at the heart. Her mother will come to wait upon me respectfully, kiss my hands,

* Vide the Arabian Nights, where Schacabac goes to dine with the Barmecide, who keeps pressing him to eat the most delicious dishes, naming them one after the other, all the while not producing a single morsel of any sort of food; so that poor Schacabac is well nigh like to die of hunger—his appetite being duly whetted at the mention of so many good things.

and say to me, 'Sir,' (for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such a familiar style,) 'I pray you not to disdain my daughter. I assure you her chief business is to please you, and that she loves you with all her heart.'

"But my mother-in-law had as good hold her peace. I will not answer her one word. * * * Upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and putting it into the hand of her daughter, my wife, will say, 'Go, present him this glass of wine yourself;' perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand.

"My wife will come with the glass, and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not even look towards her that I continue to disdain her, she will say to me with tears in her eyes, 'My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord! I conjure you, by the favours heaven bestows upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of your most humble servant? But I will not look upon her still, nor answer her.

"'My charming spouse,' she will say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, 'I will never leave off till I prevail with you to drink.'

"Then, being fatigued with her entreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, give her a good box on the cheek, and give her such a push with my foot, as will throw her quite off the alcove.

"My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if his wife had really been before him, and, by misfortune, he gave such a push at his basket of glasses, that they were thrown down and broken into a thousand pieces."—(Arabian Nights, page 115.)

Now, the absurdity of Alnaschar's conduct is obvious, inasmuch as that glasses are more frail even than wives; and having, in reality, no wife to vent his just (!) indignation upon, he could not—(seeing that there are or were no hells in Bagdad—for there is no knowing how the march of intellect may put even the Turks upon their *metal*)—he could not, I say, like Major Long-bow, when his better-half was reduced to a heap of ashes by a *coup de soleil*—ring the bell, "with infinite promptitude," and desire the servant to "bring clean glasses, and sweep his mistress away."

Now, with regard to the female old ladies, I should say the following fully deserve to come within the Suppression Bill—namely:—All old women thinking it impossible that any one can possibly be a judge of their own affairs, and of what wholly and solely concerns themselves, thereby, upon all occasions, inundating their acquaintance with gratuitous advice. All old women complaining of the extravagance of the dress of young women of the present day, forgetting that the window-curtain-looking muslins of their day were far more expensive than the satin and velvet of the present. All old ladies cumbering their sons' estates with fat jointures, and volunteering to accuse the aforesaid sons of folly or conceit, if they venture to make any improvements or alterations in their own house or lands, by the sapient assertion, "It was good enough for your father, therefore I think it might be good enough for you." All old women who think that if, like the ostrich, they hide their own heads, no one can see them—*alias*, that every one must believe the hollow professions of their words, however their actions may belie them. All old women who religiously believe that no man is good enough to be their daughter's husband, and no woman is within a thousand degrees good enough to be their son's wife, however brutal, profligate, or mediocre that son may be. All old women labouring under the mistake that age and wisdom are synonymous; in short, all old women who think that none but themselves know how to live, because they have evidently forgotten how to die.

INDISCRIMINATES.

All old women, of either sex, detected in the act of reading Shenstone, or crying over the "Sorrows of Werter." All violent *laudator temporis acti*, who must, consequently, neglect to read, with due attention, the History of England, or to remember the domestic annals of their own progenitors. All persons thinking that a child's parents must be its best friends, solely because they ought to be so.

But to particularise all the old women that ought to be suppressed, I should have to pluck a quill from the wing of time, and write the list on the tablets of eternity, therefore I have confined myself to pointing out a few of the most flagrant and urgent cases; I do so without fear, being, I thank my stars,

"Procul à Jove, procul à fulmine;"

both my grandmothers being defunct these twenty years; having no longer before my eyes the fear of Don or Proctor, consequently having no *fellow* feeling to "cow me into quietness;" my wife being unequivocally young, as she still wants four months of three-and-twenty; and, above all, I myself holding no office under the *present administration*. What then have I to fear from old women, collectively or individually? Nothing.

With you, my lords and gentlemen, I am aware that it is otherwise. Upon the framing of such a Bill as I propose, no doubt all the suppressed will be ready to exclaim—

"Such a display of municipal power
Has not been since Burdett was sent to the Tower."*

But what of this? It is not, my lords and gentlemen, that you love old women less, but that you love England more! Let me then hope, as a *sincere* patriot, ready, for the good of my country, to take a Curtius leap into the gulf of all the old ladies in the United Kingdoms, or, like Regulus, have my lidless eyes exposed to the meridian sun of the antique charms of all the old ladies of the female sex,—that your very first act in the ensuing session will be the framing of the Old Woman Suppression Bill, and your petitioner will ever pray that Time may long suspend his *Habeas Corpus* Act with regard to your august persons.

PRODICUS.

"Well I'm sure," said the dowager, when Saville had finished reading, "it's prodigious nonsense; quite impossible to make out what it's about."

"I wonder who on earth wrote it! It's devilish impertinent," said Herbert—"hang me if I don't think there's a cut at my pamphlet in it."

"The only fault I find with it," interposed Mrs. Seymour, "is its impracticability."

"Nil desperandum!" cried Saville, "for now that we have a young Queen, it is to be hoped old women will get out of fashion, and in England that, you know, is almost synonymous with non-existence."

"Vaustly rude, silly young man, my dear," whispered the dowager to Herbert, and then added aloud, "be so good as to ring the bell."

* Vide the Didactic poem of Punch and Judy.

"By-the-by," said Fanny, "this is the day we fixed to go and see the dungeons of the Inquisition, and read the names of the poor wretches on the walls, that Lord Byron spent two days in re-cutting; and if we mean to go we had better do so at once, as it is nearly three now."

"O hang the Inquisition," cried Major Nonplus, pushing away the dish of empty oyster shells with a sigh, and leaning back in his chair somewhat exhausted from his late indefatigable exertions; "though all the old rascally Inquisitors are now, thank heaven, dead and gone, yet I should be afraid to put my nose inside one of their infernal dens."

"A groundless fear that, my dear sir," said Saville, looking full at the Major's rubicund nose, "for even long before the abolition of the Inquisition they had done away with the torture by fire, therefore could have no motive for detaining *you*, did the institution still exist. Besides," added he, pointing to the mountain of empty shells, "after having braved an ostracism with impunity, what other tribunal could you dread?"

"Come, come, Master Saville," said Nonplus, rising to leave the room, "I'll thank you to be more sparing in your jokes, for one's not always in the humour for them, do you see—and there's nothing so ruinous to the constitution as being agitated after eating. What's the meaning of understanding, sir?—why digestion; of honour, sir?—digestion (of cold lead;) of conscience, sir?—digestion; of patriotism?—digestion of foreign wines, calipash and calipee; of oratory, sir?—why, digestion of other men's speeches, however heavy they may be; of morality, sir?—why, digestion of legs of mutton at home, instead of discussing ortalongs abroad; have a care then, sir, how, through the levity of an ill-timed jest, you at once endanger a man's health, understanding, honour, patriotism, and morals."

"Hear! hear! hear!" cried Saville, as the Major made his exit amid peals of laughter, and the rest of the party separated to get ready for the morning's excursion.

CHAPTER V.

"Why give you me this shame?
Think you I can a resolution fetch
From flowery tenderness! If I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it in my arms."

SHAKSPEARE.

"Love is a superstition that doth fear
The idol which itself hath made."

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

"I only know we've loved in vain,
I only hear farewell! farewell!"

LORD BYRON.

"What boots to me your jewell'd crown? or even
The broad lands of your banner-blazoned race?
They equal not the gem now wrested from my heart,
Which in life's treasury doth outweigh them all."

Unpublished Play

A WEEK had elapsed since the occurrence of the incidents recorded in the last chapter, during which time Lady de Clifford had kept her room, not so much from indisposition as from a dread of meeting Mowbray and a distaste to meeting others. She was at once happier and more wretched than she had ever yet been; happy, in spite of all things, at being loved. Oh, none but those that have been repulsed, neglected, and ill-treated, who have had every tie and relationship that nature intended for a blessing converted by circumstances into a curse, can know or imagine the resuscitation of heart that follows when the sunlight of affection has pierced the rigid springs of icebound indifference. Every feeling seems to dissolve and merge in one; the heart flows calmly on to the murmuring music of its own thoughts; we are happy in the midst of misery; nay, we become of sudden value to ourselves: for are we not the idol of another? Our whole being is like the poet's beautiful description of summer:

"The checkered earth seems restless as a flood
Brushed by the winds. So sportive is the light
Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,
Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,

And darkening and enlightening (as the leaves
Play wooing) every part."

Again and again had Julia read Mowbray's letter, till she not only knew it by heart, but knew the identical place where every word was written and the exact form of every letter. It was her companion night and day, and was only removed from her eyes to be replaced in her bosom. Four days had she passed in this manner, and in repeating aloud, in a sort of delirium, "*Then he loves me!*" to which the poor little starling that he had given her in the cathedral at Milan invariably answered, *E vero, vero*, and from that moment she loved it better than ever. But soon came the waking from this dream. She read the letter for the last time, and dwelt more upon the sort of half-prophecy contained in it about her child being taken from her, than on the words of love addressed to herself. A shudder came over her at the thought; but, drawing herself calmly up, "No," said she, proudly, "they *dare not do it!* but—but if I have for a short time forgotten that I am *his wife*, Julia, I will no longer forget that I am your mother." One burning spot glowed on her otherwise deathlike cheek, and her hand trembled slightly as she opened the little watch and took from it the withered leaf of the waterlily Mowbray had given her at Como. "I wish he had not seen you," said she, kissing it; "but, as he did, you must go too." Here a violent flood of tears obliged her to replace the pen in the inkstand, which she had taken up to write a few lines to Mowbray in returning him his letter; for so she had resolved to do, as she felt she ought not to keep it. Exhausted with the conflict between love and duty, right and wrong, she sank back in her chair and remained motionless for nearly an hour; when, again rousing herself, she said calmly, "What must be, must be, and the sooner it is over the better;" and, not trusting herself to look again at Mowbray's letter, she wrote as steadily as she was able, with her left hand, the following lines:

"Do not suppose that in returning your letter I do so in anger; no, it contains nothing to warrant any feeling of displeasure on my part, beyond, perhaps, the abstract circumstance of its being addressed to me, for which, after all, I can only blame myself. On the contrary, your truth and candour deserve and demand a similar return from me, and they shall have it. Know, then,

weak and culpable as the confession may be, that my utter inability to destroy it alone induces me to return it. Keep it I dare not; not because it would be imprudent, but because it would be sinful. Would that I could divest myself of all remembrance of you as easily as I resign these outward tokens. But alas! the very effort to forget only rivets afresh every link in the chain of memory, but all that rests with me to do shall be done. The little leaf which betrayed to you the secret with which it had been intrusted, I now return. Do not destroy it; to do so would be useless, for the inscription on it is but a copy; the original is engraven on my heart. I have not stooped to the subterfuge or affectation of denying what accident divulged to you; for I feel that, with a nature so generous, so honourable as yours, to show you all the frailty and weakness of my heart is the best way not only of securing your forbearance, but of obtaining your protection and assistance against myself. You talk of remaining with us during the rest of our journey; of being of use; of being a defence to me; alas! this would be cruel kindness and 'false reasoning all.' Now that the veil has been rent from our hearts, and the film has fallen from our eyes, what would become of our firmest resolves? how would all our struggles end, were we eternally in each other's society? Of what avail would it be to pray with our lips not to be lead into temptation, if we allow our free will to spur us into it on all occasions! No, no, it cannot, must not be; *we must part, and that immediately:* after what I have written to you, how could I speak to you? Paper does not blush, does not tremble, does not feel, Mowbray; spare all that does: tears that cannot efface guilt would not satisfy love, and they are all I could give you. Your friendship I accept and reciprocate with my whole heart; before you is a brilliant and honourable career. The Japanese have a tradition, that Birds of Paradise are transmigrated doves that have died for love; and though their mates never *see* them again in their transformed state, yet when they hear their note in the sky, it inspires the deserted dove with such delight as to make it unable to cease flying in circles through the air for several hours. So it will be with me. I may never *see* you again; but as your name soars, my spirit will hover round its fame with the only delight it is now capable of knowing. And now fare-

well. I do not *ask* you to burn this, I only *wish* that you would. That God may for ever bless you, will be the constant prayer of your sincere friend,

"JULIA."

It was not till three days after Lady de Clifford had written the foregoing letter that she had courage to send it. She felt that, though she had not seen him, Mowbray was still under the same roof, and that the moment he got that letter it would be the knell for his departure; but Fanny having that morning returned "Gicciola," which she had lent her, Julia had no longer any excuse for detaining it; so, accordingly, she enclosed her own and Mowbray's letter within its leaves, and sent it back to him. Oh, what a type of death is it to do anything for the *last* time, especially when the act includes a surrender of all that has constituted our "life of life." For some hours after Julia had sent back Mowbray's letter she appeared in a sort of stupor; she could not be said to be thinking even of him, for scarce

> "Beat that bosom where his visage dwelt
> So full, that feeling seemed almost unfelt."

Her head was leaning languidly on the arm of the sofa, and her hand hanging listlessly at her side when Fanny entered. "Do, love, try and get into the drawing-room to-day," said she, kissing her sister's cold pale forehead.

"I really feel unable," said Julia, "for I cannot dress."

"There is no reason why you should dress, dear, for there is no one there; and you never look so well as in one of those very peignoirs which you have now on. I think cambric and Mecklin lace so exceedingly becoming, it gives such a delicacy to the complexion. To be sure your cap is a little crushed, so I'll ring for Beryl to get you that pretty *ambassadrice* of old point and blush ribands, in which I really think Oberon himself might fall in love with you."

Fanny rang accordingly, and Beryl answered the summons, apparently much excited and big with some important intelligence.

"Get that pretty *ambassadrice* of Julia's first, Beryl, that I am so fond of," said Fanny, "and then, for Heaven's sake, tell us what is the matter. Has the larch foundation of Venice given way, and are we now all floating on the sea? or, more wonderful still, has Lord de Clifford's mother given you a new silk dress? for

something miraculous must have happened by your face."

"Hi'm sure, ma'am," said Beryl, settling the trimming of the cap, and holding it ever and anon at a little distance from her to judge of the effect, "Hi'm sure, ma'am, you and hevery one that knows him must feel glad of it, for he's a real gentleman, and will do credit to the name."

"Glad of what? Do credit to what name?" interrupted Fanny.

"Why, ma'am, I was going to tell you. About an hour ago a government courier arrived in great haste, asking for the Marquis of Cheveley; the hotel people told him there was no nobleman of that name; but Mr. Mowbray's valet coming in at the time, the courier soon made him understand that the old marquis was dead, and that his master was now Marquis of Cheveley. The courier said he had halso got a letter for him from the prime minister, which he wrote in a great hurry, as the carriage was waiting to take him home to Windsor in time for dinner. Well, of course, my lady, all we servants was anxious to know how Mr. Mowbray, I mean the marquis, received his new honours; so we waited till Mr. Sanford came down from taking up the letters the courier had brought; but would you believe it, ma'am," continued Beryl, turning to Fanny, who was by far her most attentive listener, "he found him with his elbows leaning on the table and his face buried in his hands, in a sort of stupor like; and although Mr. Sanford called him 'my lord,' and told him that a government courier had brought the letters, he took no notice but to point to the table and say, 'Leave them there.' Now, really, poor dear gentleman, nobleman I mean," said Beryl, correcting herself, in which she was right, for they are not always synonymous, "I do not think he can be quite right, for he has looked dreadful hill this last week to be sure, and I really think he should have medical hadvice, 'specially now he's a marquis. Law, what a fuss, to be sure, Mr. Herbert Grimstone does make about the little miserable bit of health that he has left; for hif his finger only aches, all the doctors in the place are immediately sent for; and hi'm sure such a fine, handsome, generous nobleman as the Marquis of Cheveley's health is of much more consequence than his."

"Very just observation," laughed Fanny, who never could resist a joke, especially against the Grimstone's. "And now, Beryl, have the goodness to tell Luton to mix some Brussels lace with the blue rosettes on that new Indian muslin dress of mine, as I shall wear it at dinner."

"Very well, ma'am," replied Beryl, as she folded a white Cashmere shawl round Lady de Clifford, who mechanically assisted in the operation, trembling more from agitation than cold.

"Dear me," said Beryl, giving a parting stroke to the shawl, "this reminds me of his lordship's, I mean the marquis's, generosity; for his lordship, at least Lord de Clifford, never gave me as much as a pin's point, though hi'm sure I've *valeted* him oftener than his own valleys; but that's neither here nor there. But the marquis says to me the other day, now, in the most gentlemanest like manner possible, now, quite as if I had been a lady, 'Mrs. Beryl,' says he, 'hi'm afraid you find it cold o' nights sitting up with Lady de Clifford!' 'Oh, dear no, sir,' says I (for he was only plain sir, you know, then, ma'am), 'for anything I can do for my lady his a pleasure.' 'That I'm sure it must be,' says he, in the purlitest manner possible; 'but still, Mrs. Beryl, fearing you may take cold, I must beg your acceptance of this shawl.' And with that he gave me the beautifullest green Cashmere you ever see in your life, ma'am, much fitter for a princess than a servant: indeed, my lady admired it so much, that she took it and gave me her scarlet one instead of it."

There is no knowing how long Beryl might have expatiated on the new marquis's good qualities, had not Lady de Clifford crimsoned at the allusion before her quick-sighted sister to her weakness in making an exchange with her maid in order to possess herself of Mowbray's gift. Beryl, perceiving the sudden flush on her mistress's face, exclaimed, "Dear me, my lady, how weak you are still; let me give you a little camphor julep, or you will never be able to get into the drawing-room."

Julia took the proffered restorative, and then leaning on her sister's arm, walked slowly and feebly into the next room. It was a relief to her to find it empty. Fanny placed her on the sofa, saying she should go for her work and return immediately. "So, then," said Lady de Clifford, as soon as she was alone, "Lord

Cheveley is dead; *he* will now want no excuse to go: it is fortunate, very fortunate, ver--" and she burst into a paroxysm of tears and buried her face in her handkerchief. The door opened, and a footstep advanced softly: if Julia thought at all, she thought it was Fanny; and without uncovering her face, she put out her hand and said, "Do let me go back; I am too ill, love, to remain here." Instead of the gentle remonstrance or acquiescence that she expected, she felt her waist encircled, and a thousand burning kisses imprinted on her forehead. She started up, and perceiving Lord Cheveley, gave a faint scream, and sunk again upon the sofa.

"Julia," said he, flinging himself passionately at her feet and seizing her hand, "we have no time for anger or reproach, for accusation or defence; to-morrow, before this time, I shall have left you, to borrow your own words, perhaps *for ever;* and will you, can you, anticipate that doomed hour by spurning me from you now; am I not punished, have I not suffered enough? This last wretched week I have begun my impossible lesson of trying to live without you. You think the death too slow a one, and you would kindly hasten it; be it so, then; the few remaining hours that intervene between our eternal separation shall not be made tedious to you by my presence."

He rose as he spoke, and moved one step towards the door. Julia saw, heard, felt nothing, but that he was going; going in sorrow, if not in anger: duty, pride, womanly pride, all gave way; and grasping his arm convulsively with one hand, as her other arm encircled his neck and her head sank upon his shoulder, she sobbed out, "Pity, hate, despise, but do not, do not leave me *now*."

"Oh! blessed, blessed words," said he, raising her head, and for the first time pressing his lips to hers; but they were cold as ice, for she had fainted. He laid her gently on the sofa. "Wretch that I am," exclaimed he, as he untied the strings of her cap and parted the hair on her polished brow, "thus eternally to sacrifice her to my selfishness; but to-morrow, yes, to-morrow, the struggle will be ended. She will be at peace, and no matter what becomes of me. Sweet soul! wert thou indeed fled, who could, who dare, keep that loved form from me; and, all cold and lifeless though it might be, yet would I not exchange it for all the living loveliness earth could produce."

His ravings were here interrupted by Fanny's return. Lord Cheveley rose precipitately from the side of the couch where he had been kneeling, and arranging his hair so as in some degree to hide his face, stammered out, "Dear Miss Neville, I fear Lady de Clifford must have been more ill than we had any idea of; from her extreme weakness, in rising to speak to me just now, she fainted."

"She has been very ill; but you also look ill and agitated," replied Fanny, with a penetrating glance.

"Oh, only a few natural tears at my poor uncle's death," said he, colouring.

"True: that reminds me I have not yet congratulated *Lord Cheveley;*" and Fanny put out her hand, upon which the young marquis imprinted a kiss.

"Dear Julia," said Fanny, rubbing her sister's temples with eau de Cologne, "she is indeed terribly weak; I'm sorry I persuaded her to come in here."

"After the first exertion, I should rather say that it would be of use to her," remarked Lord Cheveley, who did not like to acquiesce in anything likely to lead to Julia's again leaving the room.

"Perhaps so," returned Fanny, "for she is now beginning to revive. Have the goodness to open the window; she will be the better for the air."

When Julia came to herself, she was for some minutes unconscious of what had happened, or even of where she was; till, seeing Fanny and Lord Cheveley bending over her, the sudden recollection of all that had taken place previous to her sister's return suffused her face with crimson. She made an effort to rise, which Cheveley perceiving, and fearing that, if she once left the room, she would not return while he remained, he gently took her hand and said, with as unconcerned a manner as he could assume, "Dear Lady de Clifford, you have no idea how I reproach myself for being the cause of your so far exerting yourself as to rise just now; I would have taken all your congratulations and good wishes for granted, I assure you. I was just going," continued he, smiling, "to show you a letter I have received from Melford; I think it will amuse you: certainly the Jesuits never tried harder for proselytes than the Whigs do, though, it must be confessed, they have not the art of retaining them when made; owing,

perhaps, to their Roman magnanimity in courting their enemies and neglecting their friends."

Julia took the proffered letter with a trembling hand, and without daring to raise her eyes; enclosed in it was a slip of paper, on which was written the following lines:

"Who could bear that fond letters so sacred as thine,
Should encounter the gaze of the worldly, the cold?
No, the flame hath consumed every heart-prompted line,
And those records of love I no more shall behold!

Each phrase, well remembered, I witnessed effaced;
Thy loved name, by my lips pressed again and again;
Oh, no more let thy feelings expression be traced,
For 'twas death to destroy what I dare not retain."

When she had read them, she did raise her eyes and cast one look at Lord Cheveley, full of gratitude and esteem, as she placed the lines in her bosom and handed the premier's letter over to Fanny, begging she would read it out, as she could not very well decipher the hand. Lord Melford's letter was dated Downing-street, and *private*; it ran as follows:

My dear Marquis,

"In being the first to congratulate you upon your accession to a title, which, distinguished as it already has been, will, I feel, derive additional lustre from its present possessor, may I venture to hope, that with the other honours of my late noble friend, the mantle of his political principles may also have descended to you; in this wish I am graciously joined by the highest personage in the realm. Lord Denham returned from Russia immediately on the death of the K—: his object is nearer home; great changes have taken place in the colonies; the governor-generalship is not *yet* disposed of; I have no hesitation in saying, that the next vacant garter will accompany the office; but as I hope soon to *see* you, these matters are best discussed personally, especially as the courier only waits for this letter to start, which barely gives me time to assure you, my dear marquis,

"That I am ever faithfully yours,

"Melford."

"Which being interpreted," said Fanny, "means that, if you will, like a good boy, go out to Canada, or do any thing else they please, it shall have a pretty blue riband, so it shall."

"No, no," said Cheveley, smiling, "I rather think they have got a troublesome customer in Denham, and it would be well to have me as a catspaw, to pretend that I have been promised whatever he wants, no matter what; but I am very certain Canada is not farther from England than it is from his wishes: nor is Halifax so near it," added he, laughing, "that they should imagine there was so much of the Captain Bold about me as that I should favour them with the pleasing variation of hanging myself in their garters. However, as I see that precious document is marked *private*, I must beg of you not to mention the contents to anybody."

"Now, pray, where can you have lived ever since your entrée into this best of all possible worlds," said Fanny, "to ask or expect that women should keep a secret?"

"In the world," replied he, "where I have invariably found that they are the only people who can."

"Well," said Fanny, laughing, "I have long intended working you a waistcoat, and now I'll delay it no longer, for that last very *just observation* of yours. It shall be full of little, secret, unfindoutable, mysterious pockets, against the time when you join the Whigs and turn diplomatist."

"Well, who knows," said Lord Cheveley, smiling. "Tutte le grau facaude si fauno di poca cosa! But I hope *your* waistcoat will never be worn by a turncoat."

Here the door opened suddenly, and Herbert Grimstone, without apparently noticing that Lady de Clifford or Fanny were in the room, rushed up to Lord Cheveley, and nearly wringing his hand off, breathlessly exclaimed, "'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I congratulate you with all my heart; I hear you've a letter from Melford; has he offered you anything? what does he say, eh?"

"Not much," replied Lord Cheveley, coldly: "at all events, the letter is private, and chiefly on the subject of my uncle's death."

"Oh, ah, yes, certainly; anything about Denham in it?" probed Herbert.

"Only that he has returned from Russia, and is now in England; but I fear we are making poor Lady de Clifford's head ache," added Lord Cheveley, turning haughtily away from his selfish interrogator, who had been standing with his hat on, his arms folded, and his

back to Julia, whom he had not yet condescended to notice. "By-the-by, the Lyonese alway swear their hats when they are going to be hanged; who knows but there may be something infectious in the custom."

"I beg you a thousand pardons, my dear Julia," said he, turning suddenly round; "I cannot tell you how anxious I have been about you, or the delight it gives me," added he, kissing her hand, "to see you so perfectly recovered from your accident." And then, without waiting for any reply to so much affectionate solicitude, he again turned round to Lord Cheveley; and for a moment raising his hat to run his fingers through his hair, said, "So Denham is actually returned, is he? When do you go to England, my dear fellow?"

"To-morrow."

"To-morrow!" reiterated Herbert; "by Jove, I have a great mind to go with you."

"I never travel with any man but Saville," said Lord Cheveley, repulsively, "for they bore me to death."

Civil, thought Herbert, as he left the room in quest of his brother, to tell him that he thought Mowbray had become deusedly pompous and impertinent since he had grown into a marquis, and to inform him of Lord Denham's arrival from the North, and his opinion of the expediency of his and his brother's immediate return to England, to see what was to be done, or, in other words, what was to be got. But Lord de Clifford said he could not possibly return to England without first going on to Naples, as Captain Datchet was to meet them there at the end of the month; and Herbert, recollecting that he was also charge d'affaire from the chest of Miss MacScrew, was fain to agree to the measure.

That day poor Julia had to endure the successive congratulations of the whole party upon her recovery from her accident; and to consent to remain in the drawing-room, as dinner had been ordered there on her account. Lord Cheveley had also to endure the individual and combined congratulations of everybody; and to engage, *nolens volens*, in alternate political discussions with Lord de Clifford and Herbert; who could not understand a man's being so apparently insensible and apathetic under the yet infant acquisition of a marquisate, two hundred thousand a year, immense political influence, and, doubtless, the choice of the highest offices in the state.

"But surely, my dear fellow," said Herbert, with his

mouth full of Charteruse and a half-sipped glass of barley water in his hand, "in the position you now stand, you will not think of continuing a Tory?"

"And why not?" replied Cheveley: "if, when I might have wanted something, my principles were not to be swayed or shaken by self-interest, it is not likely that, now I can possibly want nothing, I shall voluntarily relinquish them."

"No, I don't mean exactly upon the score of self-interest," shrugged Herbert; "but, you see, it's quite impossible that the Tories can ever rally as a party, or that England can ever again be governed on Tory principles."

"Very likely not, by a faction bearing that worn-out name; but the time must come, and that shortly, when the country will rebel against being governed by no principles at all, which is at present the case."

"You forget, my dear Cheveley," said Saville, in his own peculiarly dry manner, "that the Whigs can always take refuge in their philosophy, which is about the soundest in the world, being that of Confucius. And you know one of his maxims is, 'That a man ought to change often if he would be constant to wisdom;' and another, that 'In the state wherever we are, perseverance in well doing consists not so much in not falling, as to rise again as often as we fall;' and nobody can deny the dexterity which the Whigs have evinced in this particular of late."

"Jesting apart, my dear Saville," replied Cheveley, "the first maxim contains the quintessence of truth; for which reason no really honest politician (always supposing there be such a thing) can be a *party* man. For, inasmuch as no set of men are infallible, neither can their measures be so; consequently, whoever unconditionally pledges himself to a party, must pledge himself to voting, nine times out of ten, against his conscience."

"Well, but you will allow," interposed Herbert, "that there never was an administration so completely popular; that is, which so entirely studied the rights and privileges of the people?"

"I allow no such thing," said Lord Cheveley; "for I do not think they act up by any means to the *soi disant* principles that brought them into office. Imprimis, in my estimate of the *people* I include the inhabitants of

the sister kingdom; and how their interests have been cared for, the conduct of the Whig government upon the Irish appropriation clause, during Sir Robert Peel's administration, and their subsequent measures upon *that same clause* under their own auspices during the last session, will best testify. True, ever since the *Union*, Ireland has been treated as the *wife* of England; and, consequently, is expected to endure without murmur, struggle, or retaliation, whatever insults, injuries, and oppressions her manly and patriotic spouse, Mr. John Bull, may choose to inflict upon her; while he passes for a very fine fellow in the world, as long as he rants about his own and his brother man's liberties in England."

"Which liberties," said Saville, "appear to me to be poised on the same basis as the Harrow boys' right to Mr. Newcome's fruit."

"And what might that be?" asked Lord de Clifford, sneeringly.

"Why," replied Saville, "poor Newcome's garden adjoined the schoolhouse at Harrow; the consequence was, that it was stripped of its fruit even before it was ripe. Whereupon, tired of applying to the masters for redress to no purpose, he at length appealed to the boys; and sending for the head of the sixth form to his house, he said to him, 'Now, my good fellow, I'll make an agreement with you and your companions; let my fruit remain on the trees till it is ripe, and I promise to give you half! The boy, assuming an ambassadorial dignity of deliberation, coolly replied, 'I can say nothing to the proposition myself, sir, but I will make it known to the rest of the boys, and inform you of their decision to-morrow!' Well, to-morrow came, and with it this reply: 'The gentlemen of Harrow cannot agree to receive so *unequal* a share; since Mr. Newcome is an *individual*, and they *are many!*' Now I leave you, my good friends," concluded Saville, "to draw a corollary between the numerous gentlemen of the people, and the individual gentleman or lady on the throne."

"Oh, if you did but know, or could but imagine," said Fanny, yawning, "how sick I am of those eternal politics, you would have mercy on me, and talk sense, pay compliments, or quote poetry."

"Well," said Saville, laughing, "I will try and obey you; but to talk sense when a pretty woman is at one's

side is not so easy; and as to paying compliments with *you* for their object, they would never end; and then for poetry—but yes, as this dinner is not served à la Russe, with the fruit on the table, I think old Herrick can help me to a stanza: to you, sweet ladies all, I say,

"'Ye may simper, blush, and smile,
And perfume the air a while;'

and to the confectionary," continued he, bowing to the table, "I can only add,

"'But, *sweet* things, ye must be gone,
Fruit, you know, is coming on.'"

"And so is something better too," said Lord Cheveley, kissing little Julia, who had just come into the room and clambered on his knee as was her wont. "Do you know what they told me?" said the child, throwing her little arms round his neck; "but I didn't believe it, and now I see I was right; there, stoop down your pretty little ear, and I'll tell you. Well, they told me that you were not Mr. Mowbray any more; my own dear, kind Augustus Mowbray; but that you were Lord Cheveley or Lord Something; and Mademoiselle d'Antoville said I was not to climb up upon your knee and tease you, but that I was to make you a low courtesy and say, 'Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en felicité de tout mon cœur.'" And here the little thing pursed up her mouth, raised her eyebrows, and lowered her eyelids, in imitation of her governess, which set every one laughing but her father, who said, "I'm sure Mademoiselle d'Antoville would tell you not to be so loud and so rude if she were here, Julia." "Yes, papa; but, thank goodness, she is not here; so, Monsieur le Marquis, je vous en felicité de tout mon cœur," laughed the child, mimicking Mademoiselle d'Antoville more accurately than before, and burying her face on Lord Cheveley's shoulder in a peal of laughter, in which every one joined except her sire, who cried out in an angry voice,

"Come, come, Julia, if you don't know how to behave yourself, you had better go to bed."

From this she knew there was no appeal; and the poor little thing was preparing reluctantly to obey, when Lord Cheveley interposed.

"Nay," said he, "as I go to-morrow, I must request,

as an especial favour, that I and my little friend here be not separated so soon."

"Go to-morrow?" said the child; "where are you going?"

"To England," replied he, with a sigh.

"Oh, then we are all going," cried the little girl, clapping her hands; "I'm so glad."

"No, not *all*, only me," replied Cheveley.

The poor child's joy was now turned to sorrow, and she sobbed audibly as she said, "And is Prince going too? poor Prince."

"Yes, you know I could as soon leave my heart behind as leave Prince."

"Then do leave your heart behind; make him leave his heart and Prince, mamma," said the child, innocently turning to the sofa where her mother was lying.

"Come here, Julia," said Lady de Clifford; "you are teasing Lord Cheveley;" and she hid her own blushing face against her child's as she stooped down and whispered to her to be quiet, or her papa would send her to bed.

"It is time for you to call her to order, I think," said Lord de Clifford, as he rose from table and offered his arm to his mother, when they left the room together. When the dessert was taken away and the table removed, Saville begged for some music; while he, Fanny, and Mrs. Seymour were turning over the contents of the music-stand, Major Nonplus buttoned up his coat, and fussing up to Lord Cheveley, who had drawn his chair beside Lady de Clifford's sofa, began apologizing for, and regretting an indispensable engagement that called him away. It was really provoking, that, upon the last evening of his lordship's being in their circle, and the first of her ladyship's being able again to join it, he should be compllled to absent himself; "but," added he, "I assure you, you cannot regret it so much as I do."

"That I am convinced of," said Cheveley, smiling, as he shook hands and wished him good-by. After the major's departure, and the laugh that followed it had subsided, an embarrassing silence ensued, which Cheveley broke by saying to Fanny, "Do, Miss Neville, have the goodness to sing that beautiful duet of Millar's, 'Loved friend, awake thy song.'"

"With pleasure," replied Fanny; "how very beautiful some of his music is; it is so perfectly adapted to the words."

"So it is," said Cheveley; "I am a great admirer of his compositions; but did you ever hear his wife sing?"

"No," said Fanny; "does she sing well?"

"Well is not the word; she has about the most exquisite voice I ever heard; it is so soft, so silvery, so clear. Her upper notes always give me an idea of a waterfall trinkling through sunbeams; and then she is so delicately and gracefully pretty, that one's eyes are almost as much feasted as one's ears. One of the greatest musical feasts I ever had was hearing her and her sister, Mrs. Bishop, sing together."

"Dear me, you quite make me envy you," said Fanny.

"Well, will you, in revenge, let me envy you, by hearing you sing?" asked Cheveley.

And accordingly, Fanny and Saville, who had a deep, rich mellow voice, sang the beautiful duet that Lord Cheveley had asked for.

When they came to the last verse,

> "When in days long past,
> I listened to thy song, too beautiful to last,"

Cheveley involuntarily raised his eyes to Lady de Clifford's, and mechanically repeated the words "*too beautiful to last.*"

The exquisite harmony of the last cadence had died away some minutes before he was sufficiently collected to ask them to sing something else. They good-humouredly complied by singing that sweet air from one of Blangini's Notturni, "Amor che nasci;" even had Julia and Lord Cheveley been alone, their hearts were too full to speak.

> "Men shadow out the truth when they are sad;
> They say but ill who tell us that grief speaks
> In household phrases;"*

but it was not then, while they were filling their hearts with last looks of each other, that they felt all the agony of grief which fate had prepared for them.

Love is truly a child, to whom the present is all; who plays, and even sleeps on the brink of a precipice, and feels neither its danger nor its desolation till it awakes and finds itself *alone*, and that truth, faith, memory, all save the heart, remain unbroken. Though neither Cheveley nor Julia could speak themselves, everything else

* Barry Cornwall.

seemed to speak for them. Even Monsieur de Rivoli, who had taken up a guitar and twanged people into asking him to sing, sang, with rather more feeling than usual, that charming little romance, "Ou peut fuir sans oublier!" When he had finished, little Julia said to Lord Cheveley, "Do let poor Prince come up, as it is the last evening, to wish us good-by."

"Ou peut fuir sans oublier," said he, abstractedly patting the child's hand.

"Yes, I know," replied she, "that dogs never forget; but may he come up?"

"Certainly," said Cheveley, recollecting himself, and colouring as he rose to ring the bell. The dog was ordered, and five minutes afterward the poor animal came bounding into the room; and, as if it were aware that it was paying a farewell visit, it seemed to lavish its caresses doubly upon every one, but especially on Lady de Clifford, who had always been kind to it. It placed its paws upon her shoulders, and nestled its cold nose into her neck. In stooping to return its caresses, a small Trichinopoli chain that she wore round her neck got entangled in the dog's collar, and the clasp giving way by the animal suddenly jumping on the ground, he remained in possession of the chain, which his master perceiving, disentangled and dexterously concealed; then stooping to pat Prince and call him a good dog, he said in a low voice, inaudible to every ear but the one it was intended for, "Not a link is broken, nor ever shall be." But Time—relentless Time—Fate's mercury—knocks at every door, heedless whether the tidings he brings be life or death, weal or wo, and his iron tongue now tolled midnight. One after another the party had dropped off, till only Cheveley and Lady de Clifford, Fanny and Saville, remained. The two latter parted from their friend, loading him with a thousand good wishes; but neither he nor Julia spoke one word. He was to leave Venice at six in the morning; her door closed on him—was it for ever?

Julia sat by her window all night. Morning at length dawned; it was dull and cold, accompanied by a deluge of rain. She felt grateful that the very clouds seemed to sympathize with her. Soon she heard the murmur of voices on the landing beneath the windows; Sanford and Prince stood at the entrance of the gondola; presently Lord Cheveley appeared; he looked pale and hag-

gard; he pulled his travelling-cap over his eyes as he entered the coffin-like boat; the gondola pushed off, and Julia saw him *no more!*

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The noon of that day found Lady de Clifford in a high fever, and it was a month before she was sufficiently recovered to allow the party to pursue their journey to Naples.

CHAPTER VI.

"Look you, Bill, some hanimals is more difficult to poison nor hothers, 'specially if they are venomously hinclined, and fond of the world-like."—*Bat-catcher's Diary.*

"We are all of us deceived at times, and those who do not know us much are the more deceived."—ZIMMERMAN.

"I have (though a tolerably good philosopher) a low opinion of *Platonic* love; for which reason I thought it necessary to give my fair readers a caution against it; observing, to my great concern, the waist of a Platonist lately swell to a roundness that is inconsistent with that philosophy."—STEELE.

"A gentleman of a pacific temperament, but who had somehow or other managed to incur a kicking, excused it by forcibly arguing that a 'man can no more help what is done behind his back, than what is said.'"

BEAUTIFUL Naples! whose sapphire waves flow on in music, and whose flower-heathed air laughs out in sunshine, as if primeval Eden's youth still lingered on thy shores, mocking at sin and time! Beautiful Naples! Venus of cities rising from the sea—begirt with beauty like a zone, and diademed with palaces!—shall I ever again behold you? No, never, at least as I beheld you once, for to the winter of the heart no second spring succeeds!

The journey to Naples had been performed by slow and easy stages. Still Lady de Clifford was so weak, that they had been there a month before she felt able to take a drive. Their apartments at the "Victoria" faced the Villa Reale, and the only progress that she had made towards convalescence was having her chair wheeled to her window, and inhaling the air of its de-

licious gardens. There she would sit for hours, without enjoying, or apparently noticing, anything; even the puppet-show penny-trumpet sound of the signal for the half dozen odds and ends of men that composed the guard to turn out when the king or queen passed, did not rouse her: the only objects which she seemed to distinguish from others, were when that gorgeous mockery of death, a Neapolitan funeral, passed under her window, and then she looked wistfully at the crimson velvet pall, and eagerly after the hideous masks that followed it. Indeed, she had become such a complete wreck, that the dowager of late had frequently taken occasion to impress upon her son, that, now his wife had taken to low spirits and ill health, it became doubly incumbent upon him, as soon as he returned to England, to make arrangements for living "*ong gorson;*" in other words, sending his wife quietly into the country to vegetate by herself; and soon everything was arranged to the complete satisfaction of both mother and son, even to the plausible excuse that was to be resorted to on the occasion, which was, that, with the expenses of an approaching election in view, he could not afford the *frais* of a London establishment; and, besides, the country was better for Julia's health and education!

Oh for a forty tartufe power to sing thy praise, hypocrisy! Time was when the arrangement, as it would necessarily include the removal of Mademoiselle d'Antoville also, would not have been so easily acceded to on the part of Lord de Clifford; but, must we confess it? during the month he had been at Naples,

> "A grenadier, as you shall hear,
> A much fiercer, taller man!"

Count Campobello by name, had been more constant in his visits to mademoiselle than Lord de Clifford thought consistent with her professed devotion to him. Nay, one night at the San Carlino, he could have almost sworn that he overheard the count call her "mia cara Laura!" but this *his* Laura positively denied; nay, she got quite indignant at the bare supposition of such a thing; cried, pouted, and whimpered a great deal about the hardship of not being able to see such a *very old* friend as Giovanni Campobello without being so calumniated, and that, too, by the man she adored! Nev-

ertheless, the more Lord de Clifford was adored, the more he obstinately persisted in thinking that the count's visits were a great deal too frequent, and his face a great deal too young, and much too handsome for an *old* friend; in short, beginning to suspect that there was truth in the Chevalier de Parny's assertion.

> " Que les sermons sont un mensonge,
> Que l'amour trompe tôt ou tard,
> Que l'innocence n'est qu'un art,
> Et que le bonheur n'est qu'un songe,"

he had serious thoughts of becoming moral and break-off *that* liaison.

Miles Datchet had been a week at Naples previous to Lord de Clifford's arrival. His lordship was profuse in thanks, as far as words went, for his success with Miss MacScrew; though Major Nonplus put in his claim for some of them by then confessing that *he* had written to Miss MacScrew, and attributing her change of conduct *entirely* to the force and urgency of *his* appeal—not that he meant to say that Datchet was not a monstrous clever fellow; he had experience of that before now; for, when he knew him in the Commissariat in Spain, in 1823, he used to convert all the Empecinado's pigs into Bayonne hams in the most miraculous manner. The dowager, too, was well satisfied with Datchet, or, rather, with the letter he had brought her from Mr. Tymmons, stating that Hoskins was gradually taming; that Rushworth farm was draining and re-thatching, and, consequently, that Farmer Jenkins was silenced at last. " Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate," was the feeling of Lord de Clifford when he heard that the Lees were unmanageable, and that the plot about Richard Brindal had utterly failed; it was too bad that he, who had been " foaming a patriot" all his life in the hope of " subsiding a poet," could not effectually crush or cajole that miserable family so as to prevent the chance of their being troublesome to him at the next election; but doubtless he, with his mother's assistance, would be able to construct some other plot for that purpose before the time arrived.

Datchet had also been the bearer of good tidings to Saville—no less than letters containing his father's consent to his marriage with Fanny. At any other time

this would have occasioned them unalloyed happiness; but now, in spite of it, Fanny appeared to have a gloom over her spirits for the first time in her life. The fact is, that in her close attendance on her sister during her late illness, she had discovered the cause of it; and though she had always deeply felt for Julia's unhappy lot, yet she thought, and thought rightly, that she had never been utterly and irremediably wretched till now. Of her principles she did not for a moment entertain a single doubt; but she saw that they would be preserved at the expense of her life.

Saville's love and pride might both have been wounded by Fanny's depression of spirits, at the time when every obstacle to their union had been removed, had he not, from his own observation of the alteration that had taken place in Lord Cheveley before his departure from Venice, been led to suspect the position in which he and Lady de Clifford stood towards each other; and although he had too much delicacy to hint at it to Fanny, yet it enabled him perfectly not only to understand, but to sympathize, in her unwonted gloom.

Lady de Clifford was sitting one morning, as usual, at the window, a few days previous to their return to England, with Fanny in the room, affecting to draw, but in reality watching any change in her sister's face, when little Julia ran into the room; but checking herself at the sight of her mother's pale and suffering face, she walked gently up to her on tiptoe, and, throwing her arms round her neck, said, "Dear mamma, I have never yet shown you the pretty bracelets Lord Cheveley left for me the day he went away; that nasty day, I hate it;" and the child held up a pair of emerald and diamond bracelets, the design of which was a wreath of myrtle, the leaves done in emeralds, and the blossoms and buds in brilliants and rubies. Seeing her eyes fixed on the bracelets, and imagining the train of thought they were likely to awaken, Fanny threw down her pencil.

"Come, Julia," said she, "the day is so lovely that I must insist on your taking a drive; here have we been for a whole month or more; in a few days we return to England; and yet you have not once gone to see your old favourite, the point that stretches out by Baja, at the end of the Strada Nuova. I'll give up my ride to-day; and so, casa, you must positively drive with me."

So saying, Fanny rang the bell.

"What sort of a day is it out?" inquired she of the servant, who answered,

"Very fine, ma'am."

"Any wind?"

"Not much, ma'am; and the little there is is very warm."

"Very well, then, order the open carriage round directly; and tell Beryl to bring Lady de Clifford's bonnet and shawls here immediately, and Luton to bring mine—"

"May I go, mamma?" said little Julia, earnestly.

"I do not think I am able to go, love."

"When, when am I to take a drive with my mamma again, then?" pouted the little girl; "for I am *so* tired of walking in the Villa Reale, or driving alone on the Campo with Mademoiselle d'Antoville; and then that horrid great tall Count Campobello always comes and teases me, and talks Neapolitan to me that I cannot understand. *Do*, *do*, dear mamma, go out to-day and take me with you?"

What mother ever yet resisted the "*do*, *do*," of a child, when there was no harm in acceding to it? So Lady de Clifford allowed Beryl to put on her things; and leaning on Fanny, while Julia took possession of her other hand, she suffered them to lead her to the carriage.

Deep indeed must be the gloom which the balm and beauty of a Neapolitan day does not chase away; but it did not chase away Lady de Clifford's; for there is a prostration of strength that accompanies deep affliction, which, while it partially annihilates our corporeal nature, seems to give additional vitality to our minds, till it overwhelms us with a painful sense of our own identity, and destroys the influence of external objects.

"Which way would you rather go, dearest?" asked Fanny; "through Pausilippo, and so on to Fujase, or on the Strada Nuova?"

"Whichever way you like, love," replied Lady de Clifford, with a mournful smile; "for I am not such an epicure as the Neapolitan galley-slave, who, at his execution, called for a glass of water, and, when it was brought to him, reproached the priest with 'Padre, non è nevata.'"

At all events, this speech was used, for it struck a

chill to poor Fanny's heart, from the reckless and desponding tone in which it was uttered. During the rest of the drive all her efforts to arouse and amuse her sister were equally fruitless; and seeing that the air appeared to exhaust rather than revive her, they returned home.

Time, which robs, alone can restore, thought Fanny, as she silently and sorrowfully ascended the large, dirty staircase at the Victoria that led to her own room; but Fanny was wrong. Time may heal, but it *never restores;* for our first feelings are like Venice glasses, which, once destroyed, can never be cemented; and the fragments are shunned by our best *friends* (!) as useless, if not dangerous.

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The sixth of December, 18—, was an eventful night at Naples. Vesuvius poured forth its burning flood in mightier torrents than it had done for years. The dear, good old Archbishop of Torento's favourite black cat "Otello" died, and Mr. Herbert Grimstone, who (as we have before stated) was a Homœopathist, had nearly killed himself by accidentally taking the poisonous viaticum intended to be consumed in three months at "one fell swoop!" "The why, the where, what boots it now to tell" of how all this happened; yet surely, as a young gentleman who set such a value upon himself, though his life was by no means proportioned to his *assurance*, must be of some value to others, we will relate it. Major Nonplus, that "head and front" of everybody's "offence," had deputed Mr. Wood to send him from Sicily three pipes of Marsalla; but as, in England, Marsalla is "of no account," he determined, though no conjuror, to convert it into sherry, and in order to give it a fine flavour of the Borraccha, he deposited half a pair of boots in each butt. When he deemed that it had acquired a twang that even a Spaniard would mistake for Xeres, he persuaded, or, rather, overpersuaded Herbert, in an evil hour, to taste what he called some very fine sherry that he was taking over for his friend Lord Cramwell. Now everybody knows that two of a trade can never agree, and the poison called wine is incompatible with that calling itself Homœopathy. And although foxglove has attained a high place in medicine, and often has *a hand* in curing

certain diseases, yet dogskin, especially when transformed into old boots, could not be expected, when interfering with the Homœopathic system, to do anything but put its foot into it. Consequently, shortly after Herbert had retired to rest, he felt so exceedingly ill that he darted out of bed like a shot in search of one of his powders, and, deceived by the treacherous glimmer of the rushlight, he made the just recorded fatal mistake. But soon the violent ringing of his bell summoned first his servant, who in his turn brought a physician and a stomach-pump, and eventually his mother, brother, Saville, and Major Nonplus, to the rescue. Great was the shock his tender parent received on entering the room at beholding what she thought her son's headless trunk standing perpendicularly against the wall! But it was only the clothes he had taken off, the shoulders, breast, arms, hips, and calves of which being thoroughly well padded, became a practical noun substantive, and stood alone. On the mantelpiece appeared a sort of embryo apothecary's shop, so full was it of vials, pill-boxes, lint, plasters, and boxes of Seidlitz-powders. A great many shawls lay upon the arm of the sofa, and in the centre of it was an air cushion. The toilet still breathed more of the laboratory than of the perfumer's. For stethoscopes and respirators jostled eau mignionne and crème de sultanne. But the chaos of the writing-table at once proclaimed the man of genius. Here lay a glove-box despoiled of half its contents; there two or three cambric pocket-handkerchiefs, soaking up some ink which, in the *vivida vis anima*, had been spilled. At one corner were the allegories of Apuleius and the Dialogues of Plato, buried under a ream of the Westminster Review, while at another was the *De rerum Naturâ* of Lucretius, wedged in between Locke on Civil Government and Reid on the Mind. The rest of the table was occupied with modern French novels and plays, especially that of "Ahel dans le costume du temp!" But surmounting his invaluable work on Timbuctoo was a half-written pamphlet, with "Ne Herculeς quidem adversus duos" for its motto, and the Greek word λαος, or "the people," to whom certainly the whole affair would be Greek, occurring in every fourth line, but with that versatility which genius ever possesses; on the opposite page he had commenced a French madrigal, beginning,

" Belle et charmante Zelis toi qui m'adore !"

but where was the genius of the place? Sitting in a Bergère, night-capped and dressing-gowned into a semblance of life, but still looking more like death in masquerade.

"God bless my soul," said Major Nonplus, in a disappointed voice, as if angry at having been got out of bed by a falsehood, "why, they told me you were dead!"

"So I am, very nearly," gasped Herbert.

"My dear fellow, what *have* you done!" inquired his mother, bending over him.

"For myself, I'm afraid," replied Herbert.

"My dear, my dear, don't talk so, pray," said his mother; and then turning to the English physician, who was counting his pulse and looking at his watch, added,

"I need not, I'm sure, say, doctor, that if you recover him from this here dangerous attack, no d'argent shall be spared on my part."

"I am happy to tell your ladyship," said the doctor, "that I consider Mr. Grimstone *now* out of danger, and have no doubt that in a few days he will be as well as ever, and able to travel."

"Yes, my dear mamma, I feel a great deal bettter already; but pray sit down, for you don't look well. I wish you would try the Homœopathic system."

"God bless me, my dear," said the dowager, darting full three yards from her son, as if she had been galvanized, "do you mean to poison *me* too?"

"Heaven forbid, my dearest mamma, for your will has ever been my study, and I should not wish you to do anything you did not like."

"Humph," muttered the major, pulling down little avalanches of his sugarloaf mountain of a cotton nightcap over his ears; "many a true word said in jest: I don't doubt but her *will* has always been your study."

"I'm sure, doctor," resumed her ladyship, "you will agree with me in the things I tell Herbert he ought to avoid, and never eat pepper, cucumbers, cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun."

How he was to eat cold feet, thorough draughts, and the heat of the sun, was not exactly plain to the doctor's capacity; therefore was his politeness the greater in telling her ladyship that he *perfectly* agreed with her.

Saville, who had been remarkably kind, and really anxious about Herbert during the first two hours that they were assembled in his room, could not, now that he was out of all danger, resist a smile at his rueful appearance.

"I fear," said Herbert, languidly, "I never shall be fit for anything again."

"Oh, don't despair," replied Saville. "You'll make a very good *outline of an ambassador* yet."

"I don't quite understand what you mean by that," said Herbert.

"Why," resumed Saville, smiling, "I was thinking of the old story of the Duc de Choiseul, who was so remarkably thin that, when he came to London to negotiate a peace, Charles Townshend, on being asked whether the French government had sent the preliminaries of a treaty, answered he did not know, but they had sent the *outline* of an ambassador."

"My feet are so dreadfully cold," said Herbert, not liking to join in a laugh against himself, "that I should like to have a carriage-muff."

Lord de Clifford remembering that there were generally two or three in Mademoiselle d'Antoville's room, volunteered to go for one. Although it was now past three in the morning, he entered that lady's sanctum without the ceremony of knocking, naturally supposing that she had been in bed hours before, dreaming of him. What, then, was his surprise, upon opening the door, to find the candles lighted on the table, and upon looking athwart the gleam, to see Count Campobello's tall figure seated on the sofa, and on his knee, with one arm conjugally encircling his neck, sat Mademoiselle Antoville! The room was large, and carpeted à l'Italian; that is to say, covered with green baize, and a quantity of straw laid under it: so that Lord de Clifford being *en pantoufle*, his footsteps fell noiselessly. Giving one more look to convince himself that the tableau before him was no optical illusion, he took one of the candles, and quietly walking over to the unconscious pair, rudely seized his hitherto adored Laura by the arm, and flinging her to the other end of the room, overtook the count, who pusillanimously forsook his *inamorata*, and was making the best of his way towards the door, when Lord de Clifford saved him all further trouble by kicking him down stairs. On his return, after the performance of this little ceremony, he found Mademoiselle

d'Antoville upon her knees, in a fine somnambula attitude, with her hair let down upon her shoulders according to the most approved fashion of all heroines guilty or guiltless; but all was in vain: nothing could she extort from her inexorable companion but a mandate to depart from under his roof in less than six hours! Never had mademoiselle felt so intensely before, never did she feel so intensely again! No! not even when, a year after these events, she published a novel called "Le Cœur epuisée," and had a triumphal dinner given to her on the occasion at Lointiers by six members of La Jeune France, who alternately addressed her as Aspasia and Corinne. Meanwhile Lord de Clifford returned to his brother's room foaming with rage, in the exuberance of which he proclaimed (Saville, whom he would not trust, having returned to bed) his Laura's delinquency.

"Those d—d women," said he, "do what you will for them, it's all the same. No gratitude, no honour, no faith in any of them. It was only yesterday that I replenished her wardrobe with what might have constituted the *trousseau* of a princess, d—n her."

"I fear, my dear fellow," soothed Herbert, in the melancholy retrospection of experience, "that women are like what the late King of Naples said of his troops; dress them as you will, they'll run away all the same."

"Well, well, it can't be helped," said Major Nonplus, between the interstices of a sonorous yawn in alto; "you'll be better in a day or two; but you see, just at first, love is like cheese; it digests everything but itself."

"Very just observation," said the dowager; "but," added she, taking her son's arm and wishing Herbert good-night, "I want to say a few words to you on this here business."

As soon as Lord de Clifford had reached his mother's room, she said, "You see, my dear, you must not mention this here circumstance of *momselle's* improper behaviour to Lady de Clifford; it's better not, because as she never liked her, and has been wishing her gone. *I* can say to her, that in your anxiety to consult all her just and reasonable wishes, you made it a *pint* to send momselle away, and get an English governess in her place. Besides, it will look *vaustly* well to the world; as if you always let her have her way about the little *gurl's* education, and so stop any remarks when she is taken

from her and put to school, which is what *I* wish you to do, my dear, as it will be vaustly cheaper, and prevent her mother having so much influence over her. But you see, my dear, all these here sort of things require caution and prudence, on account of the ill nature of the world; but, as I always tell you, *you* are a *vaust* deal too open and candid."

"And, as I always say, my dear ma'am, you certainly are the cleverest woman and best manager in the world," rejoined the worthy son of this amiable parent, as he kissed her hand and wished her good-night, or, rather, morning. But, somehow or other, notwithstanding these wise precautions, by ten o'clock the next day, Lady de Clifford, in common with every other inmate of the hotel, was quite *au fait* to the scene between her husband and Count Campobello, and the true cause of Mademoiselle d'Antoville's departure. Still it was a relief to know that she was gone on any terms; and as for little Julia, she felt nothing but unmingled delight at finding that she should now wholly and solely be with her own dear mother and aunt.

Herbert Grimstone being perfectly convalescent in three or four days after his accident, it was decided that they should return to England, via Marseilles, the following week. The Seymours and Monsieur de Rivoli were to accompany them as far as Paris, but Major Nonplus had threatened himself all the way to England. The day before their departure, Lady de Clifford had been reading that very horrible, but very clever book, Mr. Reynolds's "Parricide." "The description of the parricide's father," said she to Fanny, laying down the book, "shows great knowledge of human nature. He says 'he neither possessed any positive virtue or vice, and I know of but two words that will accurately describe him; he was eminently selfish and insensible.' In these two sentences all his atrocities are fully accounted for; the first being the alpha and omega of all vice, and the latter a barrier which no virtue ever passes. But still, I think the moral of such powerful materials would have been much more subtle, consequently infinitely more useful, had he made both father and son equal monsters, equal destroyers of their own and other's happiness, and still kept them within the pale of the law; for then it would have been sufficiently *vrai semblable* to have borne a comparison with the dire

hourly and daily realities of life, all arising out of the same sources, parental neglect and selfishness, and vanity let loose, like so many vicious, unbridled brutes, enacting the part of wild horses to that doomed Mazeppa, their possessor's fate. One thing this work convinces me of," continued Lady de Clifford, "namely, that the writer is a perfect Æneas of a son, though no doubt that discriminating, multiplied individual, *the world*, will vote him a parricide, and his book an autobiography. Actions being of no import whatever, thanks to the omnipotence of the press, therefore, in order to attain the reputation of great morality, people have only to write books filled with such claptraps as benevolence, virtue, morals, civil and religious liberty, &c., &c., &c., and thickly interlard it with the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers, which, being interpreted, means a total and most immoral disregard to the happiness and well-being of any and every individual. In short, to succeed in this enlightened age, when the march of intellect has billeted even every subaltern mind on that Marquis de Carabas of our social system, public opinion, *to seem* is everything; *to be*, nothing. Therefore, let all who would propitiate this autocrat follow the example of Glaucus, and forthwith exchange the golden arms of reality for Diomede's brazen ones of assumption."

"All you say is too true," replied Fanny, and she sighed as she said it; for, by the flush upon Julia's cheek, and the unusual brightness of her eyes, she could not but see how deeply she had been drawing from and referring to her own individual misfortunes.

"Do not go on reading that book, dearest," said she; "it would make you miserable if you were not already so. Here is Mrs. Armytage, which, like everything of Mrs. Gore's, is clever and delightful; but in this she really outdoes herself, for I think the conception almost Shakspearean."

Julia was about to reply, when the dowager entered, and with her usual vulpine smile, began with,

"My dear madam, I fear you will find the little *gurl* very troublesome just at present; but you see, as you did not approve of her, De Clifford made it a *pint* to part with *momselle* on that account, and—and—"

"On account of her conduct with Count Campobello, I suppose," interrupted Lady de Clifford, somewhat haughtily.

CHAPTER VII.

"Waltz, the comet, whiskers, and the new government illuminated heaven and earth, in all their glory, much about the same time; of these, the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still!"—*Note by Printer's Devil to Lord Byron's "Waltz."*

"Most men are slaves, because they cannot pronounce the monosyllable 'No.'"—LORD CLARENDON.

"Lord Bath passed for one of the wisest men in England. 'When one is in opposition,' said he, 'it is very easy indeed to know what to say; but when one is minister, it is difficult to know what *not* to say.'"

DR. JOHNSON has observed, "that all the performances of the human heart, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance. It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man were to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pickaxe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet these petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled and oceans bounded by the slender force of human beings."

Lord Melford was apparently of the same opinion; for, upon Cheveley's arrival at the Clarendon, he found a note from the premier, requesting him to call upon him at his house in —— street at his earliest convenience. "That would be never," said Lord Cheveley, as he tossed the note aside; but this Lord Melford could not hear, and, if he had, he would not have heeded it; for he was at the time in a dilemma, from which it was necessary to extricate himself and his colleagues *coute qu'il coute*, and in doing so, if he could at the same time make a powerful proselyte in the person of Lord Cheveley, his position would be strengthened and his triumph be complete. Lord Denham, whose head was to the full as long and somewhat deeper than the premier's, and who was, moreover,

the cynosure of the radical party, had, as we have before stated, immediately returned from the North on the demise of the king, and calculating upon his influence with a royal and illustrious lady, thought, as far as office went, that he would only have to choose and to accept; but, as two suns cannot shine in one hemisphere, neither can two paramount ambitions run amicably abreast in the same political race; consequently, while Lord Denham's great object was to remain at home and about court, it was equally Lord Melford's object to prevent his doing so. Something must be done; but what! ay, there was the rub; but possessing, as he did, an abundance of prompt decision and courage, which in itself amounts to genius, and nine times out of ten makes to attempt and to succeed synonymous; and having, in his political game, first played the knave and then led the queen, a little more finessing was an easy and natural result, by which he might hope to secure all the honours to himself. Lord Denham's wish had been to succeed Lord Protocol as minister for foreign affairs; but Lord Protocol had no idea of being succeeded, nor in this instance was it Lord Melford's desire that he should; there were the colonies going begging; if he could but get Lord Cheveley to accept of the governor-generalship, it would be a great point gained, because this would be so publicly coalescing with the Whigs; and Lord Denham, in the event of Lord Cheveley's being brought round, must be got back to St. Petersburgh, Vienna, or even sent to Ireland, as a *pis aller*; but, unfortunately, Lord Cheveley, for reasons best known to himself, delayed so long in his journey from Venice, that he did not reach England till the middle of December.

Rebellions, like time and tide, wait for no man, and republican patriots like Lord Denham are equally impatient of any delay that thwarts their ambition—I beg pardon, their patriotic views. The colonial disturbances were daily increasing, and Lord Denham was hourly giving the Melford administration unequivocal and alarming proofs of how deeply he felt and how much he resented their want of good faith and hollow conduct towards him; in short, a crisis had arrived, and it was necessary to meet it, which Lord Melford did by going to Lord Denham, and saying it was her majesty's personal wish that he should accept the colo-

nies, as there was no one else in whose zeal and abilities her majesty or her majesty's ministers could place sufficient confidence to trust with so important and arduous a mission.

"Thank God, this at least is settled," thought Lord Melford, as he finished the complimentary peroration; he was therefore not a little taken aback when Lord Denham drew himself up to his full height, his saturnine face growing still darker, his determined mouth becoming more rigid, and his penetrating, flashing eyes piercing with a microscopic power into those of Lord Melford, as he coldly replied,

"Then, my lord, if it's her majesty's personal wish, it is worth asking as a personal favour."

"Oh, yes, certainly, of course," stammered Lord Melford; "only it was to save time that I intimated her majesty's wishes," laying great emphasis on the last word; "but," added he, looking at his watch, that grand resource of even prime ministers when they are in a dilemma, "I am going down to Windsor now; may I convey to her majesty your consent to her wishes?"

"I can give but one answer," replied Lord Denham, haughtily, as he placed his hand upon the bell, "as soon as her majesty is graciously pleased to make known to me what are her wishes."

"Spoken like yourself, my lord," said Lord Melford, shaking his hand, apparently with the warmest friendship, as he hurried from the room to regain his carriage. "To Windsor," said he, flinging himself into the farther corner of it. Crack went the whips, and on flew the horses, but they did not fly half as fast as Lord Melford's thoughts. "D—n those Lucifer spirits," muttered the *poco curante* premier, pulling his under lip; "they give one more trouble than all the rest of the world put together. I wish the fellow was not so rich and independent; however, we are not troubled with many of the same genus, for most of our colleagues are such poor devils, both in purse and spirit, that they will take anything—but offence." Now the cause of his lordship's present *embarras* arose not so much from Lord Denham's restiffness, as from an anxiety touching the best method of making her majesty's wishes known to herself; and, when known, of getting her to convey them to Lord Denham; but as no one knew better than the gallant premier that "faint heart never won a fair

lady," by the time he arrived at Windsor he was as brave as a lion. Being immediately admitted to the presence, he lost no time in illustrating Hobbes's definition of eloquence, viz., "the putting together of passionate words, and applying them to the passions and interests of the hearer;" and so well did he succeed, that in less than half an hour he had convinced her majesty that Lord Denham's acceptance of the colonies was not only one of her principal wishes, but that it was requisite for the salvation of that part of her majesty's dominions; the next step was easy, and the youthful sovereign consented in her "most sweet voice" to write an autograph letter to Lord Denham, begging his acceptance of the mission, and flatteringly wording the request as a personal favour. A courier being despatched with this "consummation" that Lord Melford had so "devoutly wished," his lordship remained to dinner, for he was of the same opinion as Epictetus, that "a table without music is little better than a manger; for music at meals is like a carbuncle set in gold, or the signet of an emerald highly burnished." And in these our degenerate days, where is music at meals to be had except at the tables of majesty? Alas! for the best organized human plans, they have still so much of the Hydra in them, that no sooner do we lop off one fitful head, than lo! another appears, and so it was in the present instance; for Lord Denham, not content with receiving her majesty's personal request, and being made acquainted with her wishes, which, as he loyally and gallantly assured her, "to know was to obey," must needs, in his turn, demand a favour, that of being allowed to furnish the whole *frais* of the expedition from his own privy purse; the depth and subtilty of the request, which left Lord Denham perfectly unfettered as to any appointments he might in his turn make, was a source of much annoyance and embarrassment to Lord Melford at the time, but still more so at a subsequent period, when he found it expedient solemnly to deny all knowledge of the appointments of some most disreputable persons whom Lord Denham had enrolled among his suite at Lord Melford's especial solicitation. He nevertheless was "an honourable man, so are they all honourable men."

Now when Cheveley arrived in England, Lord Denham was in the thick of his preparations for his voyage

across the Atlantic; and although, some time before, Lord Protocol had resolutely and angrily refused to move one inch towards making way for Lord Denham, yet so little did the innocent premier (himself now "hushed and satiate" with good things) remember the hungry cravings of human and political nature, that he actually indulged the dream of Lord Protocol's resigning, in a paroxysm of proselytism, for Lord Cheveley, though he had selfishly refused to do so for Lord Denham. Nor was this such a chimera after all, as Lord Melford only judged by himself, and, therefore, knew how much more the Whigs will do for their enemies than their friends.

Thus stood matters when Lord Cheveley found Lord Melford's note. Awful as the moment is that severs us from the object we love, and insulates us, as it were, from all the living world, yet the temporary annihilation that accompanies it spares us for a while the acutest pangs of absence, till time has widened and consolidated the dreadful chasm in our existence, that we awaken to a full conviction of all its horrors, for it is not till then that we feel the hollow hours lagging slowly on, as though they would keep pace with our own decrepitude of heart, through which nothing glides but the vain shadows of the past! It was not, therefore, until he had actually left Italy, that Lord Cheveley felt his utter wretchedness and desolation: and London in December was not calculated to lessen it, as it only presents a pea-soup fog, which renders the necessary and natural process of respiration, almost what Dr. Johnson's idea of fine music ought to be, impossible! The solemn stillness, never broken but every second hour by the cry of "milk" or "muffins," and the roll of the solitary chariot-wheels of some peculiarly lucky doctor, while human beings are like the refugees in the Simplon, "few and far between," and those consisting of a few penny-a-liners required to be on the spot all the year round, for puffs, politics, and Daffy's Elixir: these, with some dozen dingy-looking knaves of clubs, who cannot breathe any atmosphere but White's, Brooks's, or the Athenæum, and some half dozen of the tail, their hats at the back of their heads, their hands in their pockets (where they have it all to themselves), and their faces hid in green worsted comfortables, looking very synonymous with their own favourite din-

ner, namely, "a pig's face on a bolster of cabbage!" constitute London in December.

Anglo-gastronomes may not know this *plat*; I must, in justice, add that the name was invented by a *wag* of the tail. Having for the last few months enjoyed a happy absence of newspapers, which, like other "d—d good-natured friends," are always sure to tell you something disagreeable, Lord Cheveley thought he might as well fortify himself with a little tincture of politics before he called upon Lord Melford; accordingly, he drove first to the Carlton; enveloped as he was in a sable-lined greatcoat, the collar of which concealed every feature but his eyes, he could not but marvel at the quick recognition and overwhelming congratulations of persons whom he scarcely knew! "Ah," thought he, "had my position been reversed, and I had lost a fortune and a title instead of having gained one, how very short-sighted my nearest and dearest friends would have been! I even doubt whether, upon hearing my name, they would have remembered me; yet now these worthy people, whom I scarcely know, generously remember me, nay, more, have the tenderest interest in my welfare; the warmest sympathy with my new-blown honours! Oh world! world! thou art lizard-eyed, and seest nothing that the sun does not shine upon." Finding it impossible to read the papers from the greetings and congratulations of his numerous friends, Lord Cheveley thought it better to go at once and get his visit to Lord Melford over, especially as it was his intention to go down to Cheveley Place the next day, where he intended to spend the Christmas, for Cheveley Place was in the same county as Blichingly, and only five miles from it, and Julia had been there, and might be there again; at all events, there was a melancholy pleasure in being where she had ever been; added to this, his mother, whose memory he all but adored, was buried there, and Hilton, his paternal estate, was in Yorkshire, and he did not like the neighbourhood; the fact was, he wished to go to Cheveley, and who that had the power ever yet lacked good reasons for doing what they liked. When Lord Cheveley reached ——— street, it was about half past three, but so dark that the lamp in the hall was lit. The servant having given in his name before he got out of the carriage, the porter was duly prepared with his best bow; but to Cheveley's

inquiry of whether any one was with Lord Melford, and if he could see him then, he remained silent; and the footman hesitated, till the groom of the chambers solved all difficulties by stepping forward from the inner hall, and saying in a voice that might have brought over one half the opposition,

"If your lordship will have the goodness to walk up stairs, my lord will be ready to receive you immediately."

So, accordingly, up he walked, and was shown into a room not over large, where blazed a bright fire of Kendal coal; on the table burned a pair of candles in *or moulu*, or gilt library candlesticks: the groom of the chambers shook the cushions of a bergère, drew it to the fire, snuffed the candles, and withdrew. On the table were divers piles of printed foolscap packets, tied with red tape, such as bills passed and to be passed, two or three volumes of Parliamentary debates, "Smith's Wealth of Nations," "Bentham on Popular Fallacies," and a great curiosity in the shape of a manuscript German-text copy of an unpublished work of Cicero's, "De Ordinandi Republica et de Inveniendis Orationum Exordiis," the original of which was formerly in the possession of Cardinal Mazarine, and is at present, I believe, in the library at Vienna; there was also a most official profusion of envelopes and huge sticks of red sealing-wax: under the former Lord Cheveley detected two other books.

Upon drawing them forth they proved to be the "Last Book of Beauty," and one of Paul de Kock's novels, "Le Mari, l'Amant, et la Femme." Cheveley could not help smiling as he remembered the practical knowledge the premier had had of all three characters, and how, under all the decencies and dignities of office, he had detected the nature of the man; but he had scarcely replaced the books, sorry at having disturbed them, as they were evidently not intended for public view, when his attention was arrested by the loud opening of a door in the passage, and a voice exclaiming, rather above cabinet pitch, "Remember, I am with you or against you, my lord:" this was followed by a forced cough from another person, and Lord Melford's voice calling loudly over the stairs for Lord Protocol's carriage. Lord Protocol was the utterer of the prophetic "remember," and the whole speech was in answer to Lord Melford's last attempt to get him to resign in favour of Lord Cheve-

ley; however, no sooner had the sound of Lord Protocol's chariot-wheels died away in Park-lane in their homeward course, than the folding-doors in the room where Lord Cheveley sat were opened by Lord Melford himself, who advanced with many smiles, and that two-handed cordiality which costs nothing and often buys a great deal.

"I'm delighted to see you, my dear marquis, and hope I have the pleasure of being the first to call you so!" said he, as he conducted Lord Cheveley through an inner room to a third, and closed the door. Cheveley took the fauteuil next the fire that Lord Melford pointed to, but the latter stood opposite to him, his elbow leaning on the mantelpiece. Standing is a much more diplomatic position than sitting; for if anything occurs during a conference to disconcert or embarrass, it is much easier to shift one's position and tutor one's countenance.

"The courier found you at Venice, did he not?" recommenced Lord Melford.

"Yes," was the laconic reply. Here an awkward pause ensued, during which Lord Melford looked at the nails of his right hand. His lordship had been, what was called in the war, a remarkably handsome man in those happy days when male attire was shapeless and voluminous as a balloon when the gas is out, and figure was of no account; indeed, his face was still handsome, and his eyes, though blue, had all the effect of being dark, and were not unlike the most beautiful eyes in the world, those of a Blenheim dog. The chief source of a long career of popularity had been a sort of triple bob-major laugh, in which he indulged on all occasions, even when he did not win; and having been a promising young man for forty years, it was not easy, when at length he began to perform the part of a great man, to disencumber himself of this undignified laugh, which then, like many other of his early friends, he would gladly have been rid of; and the effect of it was often ludicrous in the extreme, for sometimes, in the midst of a merry peal, the recollection of his present dignity would cause him to check it suddenly, which had the same ridiculous effect as the sudden stop of the sudden laugh of the magician's trunkless head in "Zee, zi, zo, zoo," or the "Bronze Horse," as converted into an Easter piece; and the instantaneous rigidity of the premier's muscles when he reined himself in nearly threw every

one else into convulsions. Montaigne says, that "fear sometimes adds wings to the heels, and sometimes nails them to the ground and fetters them from moving," and so it is with the tongue in the present instance: the fear of defeating his object, by being too precipitate, kept Lord Melford silent for a few seconds, and then made him resort to indifferent questions to avoid coming too directly to the point.

"The De Cliffords were at Venice, were they not?" asked he.

"Ye—s; it was with them I was staying."

"She's a handsome person, don't you think so?"

"Ve—very," and Cheveley got a most troublesome fit of coughing.

"He's clever in a way; writes good political articles," persisted Lord Melford.

"I can't fancy his doing anything well; but, then, I dislike him so very much, that I am not an impartial judge."

"He's a disagreeable man certainly; such a pompous, stilted manner."

"I think him an egregious fool besides."

"I believe he is somewhat of a fribble," conceded his ally, the premier; "dabbles in carving and gilding, and fusses about tables and chairs."

"I don't call a man a fribble," said Cheveley, "for being fond of beautiful furniture, more than for having a taste for pictures and statues; Cicero, we all know, was neither foppish nor luxurious in his habits or expenditure, and yet he gave 10,000 sesterces for a citron-wood table, and half that sum for a small maple cabinet, more, I grant, than any cabinet could be worth even in *his* days."

"Ha! ha! ha!" zei, zi, zo, zoo'd the premier; but suddenly remembering not only his dignity, but that here was an opening, he drew up, and became "every inch" a prime minister as he replied, in a complimentary tone, "Why, provided that it was a cabinet that your lordship formed part of, I don't think you would find many to coincide in that opinion."

"Then," said Cheveley, bowing to the hollow compliment, "I fear they must know even less than I do of the trade of cabinet-making; for I have always understood, that materials that have long been used in other forms, if only hastily and slightly veneered on

the expediency of the moment, will never dovetail well into any new work."

"Well, but metaphor apart," replied Lord Melford, protruding his head and looking Cheveley for the first time full in the face, "you surely are by far too enlightened to suppose that this country can ever again be governed upon Tory principles; the times are changing; and not with the locomotive slowness of the pillions, and jennets, and lumbering coaches of our ancestors, but with the rapidity and diffusion of steam and railroads; and we must change with them; ay, and through the medium of the vehicles they provide, and not rummage the Tower for Henry the Eighth's saddle or Queen Elizabeth's gilt car."

"I agree that the times are not changing, but changed; and that, to a certain degree, it is necessary to change, or, rather, to progress with them; for that the same legislative code that was comparatively perfect in the days of our forefathers, would, without occasional alterations and remodelling, be as obsolete and inconvenient to us their descendants as their flowing wigs and trunk hose would be to our modern notions of the convenient in dress, no one will attempt to deny; but what I object to is, that, in altering the fashion, we go well-nigh to destroying the material, and stripping to that degree of barrenness that must endanger our constitution."

"Why," replied Lord Melford, "for that matter, nothing human can be perfect; and perhaps, '*Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ*;' and the ablest measures will always have some great handle, of which the many can take hold. Yet it's quite impossible that the wisdom of one age can be the wisdom of all ages. Were Lord Bacon living now, his genius would be the same, but his manner of evincing it would be very different; and Cardinal Wolsey's diplomacy, though equally subtle and energetic, would, perforce, have been poised on a different basis."

"Quite true," said Cheveley; "but I deny that in any age Lord Bacon would, from expediency, have become a Lord Bolingbroke or a Lord Brougham any more than Andrew Marvel would ever have turned, through the pressure of the times, into a John Wilkes or a William Cobbett."

"I am not quite sure of that," zee, zi, zo, zoo'd the premier; "circumstances make involuntary changes in us all."

"You think, then," said Cheveley, smiling, and with rather more point than was quite consistent with his usual good-breeding, "that, did Licinius Mutianus flourish now, he might perhaps prefer dining every day at court to entertaining his friends in a hollow tree?"*

The best of all possible ways to parry a conversational thrust is not to appear to feel it, much less to wince under it; so Lord Melford suddenly recollected that it was very *infra dig.* for a prime minister to have time for metaphysical discussions, and abruptly exclaimed,

"However, as my time is full from half past four till eight, I had better come to the point at once with you, my lord; frankly, then, can I induce you to become an ornament to, and a supporter of, my administration?" And as he put this question in a quick but energetic voice, Lord Melford fixed his eyes on him, as though he could look him into acquiescence.

"Then I answer as frankly, my lord," replied Cheveley, rising, and putting on his gloves; "you *cannot:* there are three reasons against it, which might be reduced to one; that of my political tenets differing totally from your lordship's; next, my talents (if I have any) don't lie in politics, because I have never been spurred to them by inclination; and, thirdly, though Napoleon declared that every man has his price, if you can but find it out, I have none, because *I want nothing.*"

The last was the only reason that Lord Melford could fully comprehend, and thought cogent; the first two were, in his opinion, "frivolous and vexatious," for he had been accustomed to convert Tories into Whigs by the magic wand of office, and to stock the state with persons who had not the slightest political genius; in short, he was as good a metamorphoser of bipeds as the Yorkshire ostler was of quadrupeds; who, when a traveller asked him what breed a strange-looking animal of the canine species was of, that was squatted before the door of the inn, replied, "Whoy, sur, when measter got him he wur a greyhound, and we called him Floy

* See Pliny's account of the immense hollow plane-tree in Lycia, wherein the Consul Licinius Mutianus used, with his eighteen friends, to dine and sup, and even to sleep, in preference to his own marble chamber and richly-wrought bed of beaten gold, with canopies of rare embroidery.

(Fly); then we fattened him up a bit, and he wur a fox-hound, and we called un Trap; but now we've cut the ears and tail on him, and made a mastiff on him, we calls him Lion!" There was nothing, therefore, farther for Lord Melford to do but to bow coldly, express his regrets, and change the subject as quickly as possible; which he did by observing, as Cheveley was taking possession of his hat and cane as a preliminary to his departure,

"You've heard of poor Neville's accident, I suppose?"

"No," replied Cheveley; "what Neville?"

"Lady de Clifford's father: he dislocated his ankle the other day at Melton, and is now in town under Astley Cooper; you know that he is going to sell his house in Berkeley Square, and live entirely in Yorkshire?" added Lord Melford, raising his voice, as they had now reached the door that opened into the passage.

"I don't know him personally," said Lord Cheveley; "but am sorry for his accident."

And here the two peers separated, shaking hands three pressures less cordially than when they had met. Cheveley to return to his own thoughts at the Clarendon, and Lord Melford back to his library chair, to extract all the consolation possible out of the reflection that, as Lord Protocol would not resign, and there was no other office actually vacant at the time, it was perhaps less embarrassing to him, on the whole, that Lord Cheveley did not accede to his overtures: had he been some poor devil who had been speaking himself into a consumption, writing his fingers to the bone in pamphlets and leading articles, or wasting his patrimony at elections in support of the Whig interest generally, and the Melford administration particularly, he might have been put off and kept on with promises and prevarications; but a nobleman of princely fortune could not be treated in the same way: it would be necessary to pile his coffers still higher with the solid realities of *political gratitude!* "After all, perhaps it is better as it is for the present, and there is no knowing what time may bring about; he is young; love often does wonders, and makes as many politicians as it mars," said the premier, thinking of his own pretty niece as he dipped his pen into the ink, and wrote the following paragraph for all the ministerial papers of the next day:

"We have good reasons for knowing that the report current last week in several political circles, of the premier having made overtures to the young Marquis of Cheveley to join the Melford administration, is totally without foundation. The fact of the noble viscount's having been a great friend of the late marquis's since the days of Fox, and being also a personal friend of his nephew's, the present marquis, may perhaps have given rise to this report, especially as we believe we are correct in stating that Lord Melford is the only person the young marquis has yet called upon since his return from the Continent."

Now there had been no report whatever about Lord Melford's overtures to Lord Cheveley; but no doubt there would be, and so it was as well to be a little Irish, and contradict it beforehand. And what is the use of being the proprietor of that Hercules of Policinello's, the press, if one cannot pull the strings of the puppets when and how one pleases?

CHAPTER VIII.

"Lords of the quill, whose critical assaults
O'erthrow whole quartos with their quires of faults;
Who soon detect, and mark where'er we fail,
And prove our marble with too nice a nail!
Democritus himself was not so bad;
He only *thought*, but *you* would make us mad!"

LORD BYRON'S *Hints from Horace.*

"A modern critic is a thing who runs
All ways, all risks, to evitate his duns;
Let but the d—l ask him home to dine,
And lend him money, while he gave him wine,
Howe'er obscene the trash old Nick might write,
Its praise his grateful guest would still endite:
Swear it was moral, beautiful, refined!
And that each page evinced *a spotless mind!*"

"Yet think of this when many a tongue
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart *thou lovest* wrong,
And brand a" *still un-*" blighted name."

LORD BYRON.

I ACKNOWLEDGE my obtuseness, and confess that I have never been able clearly to define the chronological point alluded to in that often-quoted line,

"E're England's griefs began."

Had it not been written so long before their advent, I should, from my own personal experience, feel quite convinced that it was a national reflection upon those banes of domestic happiness, clubs and cabriolets, pipes and politics, railroads and reform-bills; but, no, as I said before, the stanza was penned prior to these cluster-plagues; and, till they appeared, what could England's griefs have been? To be sure, I'm not very well versed in English history; but still I think, as men went, and still more, as men go, that Harry the Eighth was a good sort of man enough (whatever queens may think to the contrary), for he did not establish the decapitation and repudiating of wives into a general custom; but, with a proper sense of his kingly dignity, reserved this luxury as a royal privilege.

Ah! poor man! how he would stare could he look out of his grave and see the pitch luxury has got to now even among the commons of England! But I must leave this interesting subject, and return to Lord Cheveley; so "one at a time, if you please," as poor, dear Henry the Eighth said to his wives. There is nothing which tends more to aggravate a feeling of desolation than a large room untenanted save by ourselves; the paraphernalia of a fine dinner, when we have neither appetite nor companionship to help us through it. Lord Cheveley felt this as he mechanically sipped his claret, after his solitary meal at the Clarendon. He rose and took two or three turns up and down the room; he remembered (and it was the only part of their conversation that at the time he *did* remember) that Lord Melford had said the Nevilles were in town; and then followed innumerable lamentations upon his ill luck in not knowing them. "It would be some consolation to know *her* father and mother; but no, it is better not; did I not promise that I would never, directly or indirectly, come in her way? Ay, the promise was easy to make; but oh! how hard to keep! And Saville, what is he about? surely, surely he might have written one line; but there it is:

> "'Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
> Can neither feel nor pity pain.'

He is too happy in his happy love to think of his poor friend; or perhaps he suspects how it is with me, and

plays the prudent; people are so coldly calculating for others." Cheveley sat down; his elbows rested on the table, his face was buried in his hands; the recollections of the last few months of his life crowded, as it were, to a focus in his heart, and he sobbed like a child. Memory is the conscience of love; and from the moment we leave what we have loved (either from principle or the want of it), its murmurs leave us no peace. Again Cheveley paced the room, and with that restlessness of spirit which ever makes the unhappy think that they will be better anywhere than where they are, he rang the bell and ordered the carriage.

"Will your lordship take coffee before you go out?" inquired Sanford, when he had received the order.

"No, I'm going to the Athenæum: I'll get some there. Let the carriage come round directly."

What hotbeds of masculine selfishness those said clubs are! No wonder the homes for which it is neither convenient nor agreeable to provide the bare necessaries of life, should be deserted for luxuries to be had at a cheaper rate, and even to those whose ample means secure the same style of living at home: yet, to nine Englishmen out of ten, who detest ladies' society, and never desire to see a woman's face unless it be those belonging to ladies of a certain description, the luxury of hats and dirty boots is irresistible, to say nothing of "the Club" and the "House of Commons" being always unquestionable places to note in the conjugal log-book. It would save a great deal of trouble to inquiring foreigners, if, for the future, lexicographers would insert opposite the word "home"—a place for keeping wives and children; "mutton chops"—food for ditto.

Were dictionaries thus explicit, tourists taking inventories of foreign countries might avoid even the little trifling errors made by a recent German traveller in his book, where he states that the "English physicians always wear black, and sometimes swords; that all the opposition eat boiled beef; and that a Tory dinner-table is distinguished by little rolls, while the Whigs show their vulgarity by uncouth hunches of bread!" When Cheveley reached the Athenæum, a group of four were standing before one of the fireplaces. He took possession of a table at one side of the chimney-piece; and while he is busy turning over the newspapers and magazines,

you and I, dear reader, for want of something better to do, will take a look at the *partie carrée*. One was a good-natured-looking elderly gentleman, a Mr. Spoonbill; his physiognomy was that of a snipe, whose bill had been ground down; his *cheveleur* was thin and grizzled, but the few remaining hairs he had were rampant, and formed an inverted V over his forehead; in short, he was one of those good creatures you often read of, but seldom see, who remained constant to wide-frilled shirts, ribbed silk stockings, watch-fobs and large seals, and who was always able—and, what was infinitely more extraordinary, *willing*—to lend a friend four or five hundred pounds. His *métier* was that of *raconteur* and diner-out; and for the last half century, not a debate of any importance had taken place without his having been present. He was a Whig of the old school; and now he sat in an equestrian attitude upon a chair, the ends of his snuff-coloured coat touching the ground, the back of the chair supporting his elbows, and his interlaced fingers supporting his chin, as his upward gaze was directed to a tall, lanky individual with whom he was talking politics; for what else can Englishmen talk about?

The person he was at the moment listening to, and who was standing with his back to the fire and his hands behind his back, was evidently the oracle of the party; he was a Mr. York Fonnoir, the Radical editor of a Sunday newspaper called the "Investigator." His personal appearance was anything but prepossessing, being in features like a Calmuc Tartar, and in complexion like a badly-embalmed mummy. Nevertheless, he was unmistakably gentlemanlike, and about the most agreeable man in England; brilliantly witty, and, what is rarer still, deeply humorous: add to which, he was unquestionably the best living English political writer, for his English was genuine, and his style terse and forcible in the extreme, having at once the solidity and the brilliancy of the diamond; but, alas! like many other truly enlightened men, his morality was as lax as his opinions were liberal. And yet, among the shining lights which he had so lauded and admired, there were many worse than him; for he had neither turned his wife and children out of their home to make way for a mistress, nor then torn his children from their mother in order to swamp a lesser injury in a greater; for, like

"Werter, to decent vice though much inclined,"

he had sufficient sense to think the world large enough for every one. Although professing the most ultra independence of principle, both in literary and political matters, it was ludicrous in the extreme, and somewhat disgusting, to see the utter trash in literature, and the disgraceful tergiversation in politics, that was lauded to the skies, or defended beyond them in the "Investigator;" provided the perpetrator, whether through feeding, flattery, or financial arrangements, were but of his clique; however, great integrity and straightforwardness of purpose can scarcely be expected from any man whose morals are derived from materialism, and whose ideas of purity of sentiment emanate from the life and writings of Jean Jacques, or from those who imitate him in both; while to read Paul de Kock, or

"Laugh in Rabelais' easy-chair,"

forms his *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment. Yet, consistency, what is it! I have not a dictionary at hand, therefore I don't exactly know; and in these days, when "money in both pockets" is the only tune *littérateurs* or politicians care for, it is difficult for them to know *sur quel pied danser*. Opposite Mr. York Fonnoir stood a jackal of his, and many others besides, in the person of Mr. Fuzboz; he was neither tall nor short, but remarkably plebeian looking, which was the only thing candid about him: he wore white Russia ducks in December, and was not a little proud of being a very ugly and noseless likeness of a "great tragedian," whom he tried to imitate in all things, even to his handwriting.

Mr. Fuzboz was a sort of lick-dust to Mr. Fonnoir, and to Mr. Anybody, and everybody else of any celebrity to whom he could get access; he it was who did the theatrical and other plasterings in the "Investigator;" and, above all, he it was who invented biographies of "Eminent Living Authors" for magazines and other works, suppressing the full-fledged progeny of elderly gentlewomen, and pioneering away wives and other superfluous relations of literary gentlemen, agreeably fettered by less ponderous ties; in short, he was a most useful creature, good Mr. Fuzboz, being Bozzy to all the Dr. Johnsons, and Howel to all the Ben Jonsons of the day, to say nothing of his always having a stock of

"Brummagem" enthusiasm on hand, and being a perfect Boreas at a puff.

Next to him, "though last, not least," stood Mr. Frederic Feedwell, who might not be worth mentioning but that he had the honour of being a particular friend of Lord de Clifford's and Mr. Herbert Grimstone's: they constituted his only friends, and almost his only acquaintances, for his character was bad even among the bad. About Mr. Frederic Feedwell there was nothing natural but his birth, his selfishness, and his stutter; nature had never intended him for a hero of any sort, for there was something *tant soit peu ridicule* in his whole appearance that militated against it. His features consisted of an immense pair of over-fed-looking blue saucer eyes; his cheeks, since his last trip to Paris, were equally like those mysterious-looking pink saucers, with a dash of yellow over them, that are sometimes seen, amid cap-blocks, blonde, riband, and tulle, tossing about a lady's maid's room, but for what purpose they only know: his nose was very thick and of the aspiring order, for it would turn up in spite of his unwearying and constant efforts to pull or coax it downward; and good things used his mouth as the print of the animals' feet did the entrance of the lion's den in the fable, they all went in, but none came out. He was by nature thin, but from his Apician tastes he was getting an incipient paunch, which, by pushing up his waistcoats, always gave them the appearance of being too short. He wished to be thought about thirty, but was, in reality, about eight-and-forty; and, even under cover of an Hyperian chestnut wig, did not look an hour less than six-and-forty.

Mr. Frederic Feedwell's fortunes were as precarious and undefined as his birth: he had originally been intended for a diplomat; but, whether he proved too diplomatic at the gaming-table or not, he failed, and then tried the bar, doubtless preferring that to being tried at it. The way in which he contrived to eat his terms was by taking chambers in Lincoln's Inn, keeping a French artiste, and trying how many meals a day he could possibly manage, first by a course of late, and then by a course of early rising. Next to himself, he loved his dinner better than anything in this world; and next to his dinner, he loved his cook, as the cause of that sublime effect. This love it was that brought about

one epoch in his life, in the shape of his first duel. In the chambers beneath him vegetated a briefless eater of beefsteaks and digester of Blackstone: now it so happened that, all unworthy as he was of such an honour, he shared the same kitchen with Mr. Frederic Feedwell; and one luckless day he dared to be hungry at five o'clock, when his laundress repaired to the kitchen to get ready a broil for him, little knowing the one that awaited her.

Monsieur Horsdœuvre, Mr. Frederic Feedwell's *chef*, was in the act of marinading a hare, and the idea of having the fire spoiled by such an "infernal machine" as a gridiron was more than either his patience as a man, or his genius as a cook, could bear; so, accordingly, after remonstrating in vain with the beefsteak beldam, he flew up stairs, spit in hand, to his sympathizing master, and, with the air of a Sylla, or, rather, of Talma in "Sylla," indignantly appealed to him whether he was to be insulted in his own kitchen; and whether the *entremets* of *monsieur* were to be endangered for the dinner of a *Monsieur Jaqueson* (Jackson). "*Animal que sait manger, mais qui ne sait pas goûter!*" concluded Monsieur Horsdœuvre, raising his voice, and thumping his heart with his right hand, conscious, in one sublime sentence, of having uttered the most degrading aspersion with which one human being could stigmatize another.

"Certainly not, my good Horsdœuvre," said the great Frederic; "you may retire; I will myself avenge your injuries, for they are mine."

The great *chef* doffed his cotton nightcap, clasped his hands, and withdrew, showering down three courses of thanks upon his generous and benevolent master, who immediately sat down and penned a challenge to the unfortunate Mr. Jackson, who, with a slippered foot on each hob, was anticipating hot beefsteaks, and not dreaming of cold lead. At first Mr. Jackson thought Mr. Frederic Feedwell must have lost his appetite, and next his wits, in consequence of it; then he thought the whole thing must have originated in some strange mistake; so, accordingly, he tried to remonstrate with him upon the more than absurdity of fighting a duel about a kitchen fire! but the more Mr. Jackson tried to explain and apologize, the more injured and insulted Mr. Frederic Feedwell felt, and the more indignant he

grew; so the duel he insisted upon, and the duel he had; pistols and seconds were procured, and Wormwood Scrubbs, and six in the morning, fixed upon for the next day but one; Herbert Grimstone was to be Mr. Feedwell's second. Here I must record a touching little trait of considerate amiability in Frederic's character: a *ci devant* diplomatic acquaintance had sent him a case of *âmes damnées** from the Bosphorus; and Monsieur Horsdœuvre, next to his skill in dressing sturgeon, was celebrated for his *salmis* of *âme damnée*, which, with hock and shalot, *et la moindre soupçon de cavier*, he contrived to render almost a fac simile of woodcocks. The Dowager Lady Dangledog, Frederic's aunt, had that morning sent a quantity of game and venison, so that, altogether, his larder was well stocked, and the very morning of the duel Horsdœuvre had received orders for a splendid banquet "in the chamber of Apollo." Yet, with firearms around him and death staring him in the face, he neither forgot his friends nor their dinner; but, with the *sang froid* of a truly great man, sat down and wrote the following circular to the only three men in London whom at that time he knew, namely, Lord de Clifford, Herbert Grimstone, and a low attorney of the name of Loadall:

"My dear fellow, should I fall, pray come and dine at my chambers to-day at seven, as Horsdœuvre will be hurt if there is no one to eat his dinner; and while you are discussing his incomparable *âmes damnées*, think of your faithful friend, FRED. FEEDWELL."

But the one who could best appreciate the *âmes damnées* the fates decreed should be there to do so; for Mr. Mr. Frederic Feedwell returned uninjured from the field of glory, as poor Mr. Jackson seemed fated to miss fire on all occasions; and the seconds succeeded so well in reconciling the hostile parties, that Mr. Frederic Feedwell, upon regaining his drawing-room in Lincoln's Inn, turned round facetiously to Mr. Herbert Grimstone and said,

"My de-de-de-dear fellow, as I could not kill him in a de-de-de-duel, I'll kill him with a dinner, for common people always die of a good dinner, that is, of not ne-ne-ne-knowing what they eat."

* Particular kind of seagulls, so called.

And accordingly, Mr. Jackson was asked to dinner, and became the butt of Mr. Frederic Feedwell and his friends. The next two years of his life Mr. Feedwell devoted to metaphysics; and at the end of it ascertained beyond a doubt that all women like white sauces better than brown; and what were the discoveries of Locke, Newton, or Galileo to this? At the conclusion of this period, Mr. Herbert Grimstone went chargé d'affaires to a German court, and took Mr. Frederic Feedwell with him as a sort of double; and by stuffing him into one of his own king's-button coats, made him useful in returning visits, and personating him where he was not known. Here Frederic became a great man, passing himself off as one of the legitimate Feedwells, whose name is a *passe par tout*, and doing all the mischief he possibly could, setting wife against husband, husband against wife, parent against child, and child against parent, in every house to which he had the *entré*.

It at length became known to him that his absence would oblige, and he returned to England, fortunately for himself, just on the first flush of the pauper parliaments, when he became member for Colchester for six weeks, and evinced his zeal for the local interests of the borough he had the honour to represent by devouring incredible quantities of the "Natives!" The best way of obtaining a popular carriage, he thought, was to be constantly seen upon the top of the mail between London and Colchester, where he hit upon a plan for advertising his senatorial honours that Mr. Rowland, of Macassar oil celebrity, might have envied; which was, whenever the coach stopped to change horses, crying out, "Any one here want a frank? I shall be m-m-m-most happy to give them one." In his maiden speech he immortalized himself by combining a disparity of purpose and opinion perfectly unheard of in parliamentary annals; the debate was on the third reading of the Reform Bill, which was then at the crisis of its struggle. Mr. Frederic Feedwell rose, and looking round the house with the air of a Hampden, addressed the speaker as follows:

"Sir, I differ *in toto* from the honourable member for ——— who has just sat down; I also totally disapprove of every single clause in this bill from first to last; but, nevertheless, I shall make it a point to v-v-v-vote for it:" in vain the speaker cried "order, order;" the house

was convulsed with laughter, and Mr. Frederic Feedwell rushed out of it, declaring that a man's best friends were always jealous of him the moment he did anything better or greater than themselves! It was impossible to know Mr. Frederic Feedwell, and not be reminded of Monsieur Fumlo's epigram every time one looked at him.

> "Qu'il est heureux ce cher Monsieur Dorval,
> Il s'aime, et n'a point de rival!"

In point of agreeability, his whole stock-in-trade consisted of two anecdotes; the one *à propos*, or sometimes *à propos des bottes*, to religion, Sunday schools, or a mother hearing her child its catechism, which was as follows: and always prefaced with "Oh, yes, there is nothing like r-r-r-religion; you know the clergyman who was q-q-q-questioning a young girl from the catechism of Heidelberg, and put the first question, 'What is your only consolation in life and in death?' the girl r-r-refused for some time to answer; but when the priest insisted, she said, 'Well, then, since you m-m-must know, it is the young shoemaker in Agneux-street!'" and, to add zest to these charming little *morceaux*, he had a trick of jerking the two fore-fingers of his right hand above his head at the conclusion of each of them. The other he always brought out at dinner *à propos* to any one's aspersing the cook's reputation by adding pepper or salt to what they were eating; the proem to this was invariably, "I have no snuff, my dear fellow," with a shrug of the shoulders, to which the natural reply was, with a look of surprise, "Snuff! I did not ask for snuff." "N-n-n-no, my dear fellow, but I never can see any one deluge a thing with pepper without thinking of the story of Kant's friend asking him to dinner one day at the table d'hôte at Königsberg, when a dish of vegetables being placed before a man who sat opposite to Kant, he immediately emptied the whole contents of the pepper-box into it, saying, 'I am exceedingly fond of this dish well peppered;' 'and I,' said Kant, spilling the whole contents of his snuff box again over the pepper, 'am exceedingly fond of it with plenty of snuff!'"

Such were the group assembled when Cheveley entered; Mr. Fonnoir was holding forth upon Lord Denham's present position and future prospects; Mr. Spoon-

bill was listening most attentively to all he uttered thereupon; Fuzboz was exclaiming, "how very true that is," to every "if" or "but" that fell from Mr. Fonnoir; and Mr. Frederic Feedwell was coaxing down his nose with his left hand, while with his right he unbuttoned the first two buttons of his waistcoat. From Lord Denham they got to Lord de Clifford.

"I wonder," said Mr. Fonnoir, "that the ministry does not do something for De Clifford."

"Yes, he's been of great use to them, I believe," replied Mr. Spoonbill.

"He's amazingly clever," interposed Fuzboz.

"A shocking brute to his wife, though, is he not?" inquired Mr. Spoonbill.

"Oh, who cares for that," pshawed Fuzboz, contemptuously; here Lord Cheveley raised his eyes, and if looks could consume, the enlightened Fuzboz would have been reduced to ashes.

"To my own knowledge, I've seen her very provoking to him," said Mr. Fonnoir.

Cheveley actually writhed; and nothing but the conviction of the injury it would do Lady de Clifford kept him from reducing Mr. Fonnoir's perpendicular to a horizontal position on the spot.

"Ah, but you don't know what previous provocation he may have given her," premised the good-natured Spoonbill.

Cheveley came to a secret resolution of making his acquaintance the first opportunity.

"But what business have women to be provoked?" fiated Mr. Fonnoir, with his short, husky, satyr laugh.

Mr. Frederic Feedwell, who had been hitherto silent for fear of impeding the progress of his digestion, now observed, as he turned his large blue saucer eyes full upon the mirror, "I think he is very j-j-j-jealous of her."

"Well, I should say, there never was a man less so," said Fonnoir.

"Decidedly," echoed Fuzboz.

"Ah," said Mr. Frederic Feedwell, with a shrug and a jerk of the two fore-fingers of his right hand in alto, "I dare say y-y-y-you have no reason to think him so; b-b-b-but I judge from what I saw when *I* was staying in the house."

"Well," said Spoonbill, "I must say I never heard a breath against Lady de Clifford, so he surely can have no cause for his jealousy."

"Women," said Mr. Frederic Feedwell, casting another look of proud devotion at the glass, "have sometimes great temptation thrown in their way, and then every allowance must be m-m-m-made for them."

"Why, hang it, Feedwell," laughed Mr. Spoonbill, contemptuously, "come, come, don't try to make us believe that their temptations, like those of St. Anthony, sometimes consist of prodigious bores (boars); it won't do, my good fellow, it won't do; the *prima facie* evidence is against you."

It was a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Frederic Feedwell's personal comfort that the words "Viscountess de Clifford" caught Cheveley's eye, in a paragraph in the Morning Post, at the time of his compassionate speech with regard to the temptations women are sometimes exposed to, or a *coup de pied* might have given the *coup de grace* to his assertion; the paragraph was as follows:

"Viscountess de Clifford. We regret to state that this amiable and distinguished lady now lies dangerously ill at Venice."

Chevely read no more; the letters swam before him, the room whirled round with him, and had Mr. Frederic Feedwell roundly declared that all Lady Clifford's unhappiness arose from a hopeless attachment to his own matchless self, he would not have heard him as he left the room and rushed down stairs; for, swift as lightning, he had taken the resolution of going to Mr. Neville's house, and ascertaining the truth of the paragraph he had just read; in his way into the street he nearly jammed to death an unfortunate, half-evaporated looking man, who was coming to the Athenæum for "change of dulness," to finish an article for the Westminster Review, as he let the spring doors swing out of his hand and close upon the new arrival; and, upon gaining the street, he was walking hastily on, when his servant followed him with an "I beg your pardon, my lord, but the carriage is here."

"Eh, what, yes, but I don't want it; I'll walk home," stammered Cheveley.

"If you please, my lord, it is snowing hard," remonstrated the footman.

However, whether Cheveley pleased it or not, the snow, impelled by a northeast wind, came drifting fast in his face; but as he persisted in his intention of walk-

ing home, the knight of the shoulder-knot was obliged to retire; and philosophically getting into the carriage himself, shut up the steps as he best could, and having, prior to drawing up the window, called out "home" in his usual sonorous voice, he threw himself back in the carriage, and came to the conclusion that any man walking on such a night who had a carriage at his disposal must be mad; and thought what a much better marquis he would have made than his master. Intensely cold as the night was, Cheveley was in a perfect fever by the time he reached Berkeley Square, as he had walked there from Pall Mall in less than ten minutes, and it was not until he had turned into the square from Bruton-street that he stopped and remembered that he neither knew the number nor on which side of the square Mr. Neville's house was. As Gunter's door was still open and a light gleamed from the shutters, he was on the point of turning in there to ask, when the fear of being recognised deterred him. While he was deliberating as to how he should gain this necessary piece of information, a policeman passed, and his doubts were at once solved.

"Can you tell me," said Cheveley, "what number Mr. Neville lives at in this square?"

"Mr. Neville's house, sir," said the man, civilly, and pointing to it with his stick as he spoke, "is No. —, on the opposite side of the square, nearly the centre house."

Cheveley thanked him and hurried on; upon arriving at the door, his heart beat so violently that he had not courage to knock; and, as he leaned for a moment against the railing, an apothecary's boy, with a covered basket, came up, and selecting a packet from it, gave a sharp ring at the bell: the door was opened, the medicine given in, and the servant about to shut it again, when Cheveley advanced,

"Pray," said he, making a strong effort to speak calmly and without embarrassment, "can you tell me where Lady de Clifford is now? for I want to forward a parcel to her." Luckily for Cheveley, there was no light in the outer hall, and that from the inner was not sufficiently bright to discover his pale and agitated face.

"She is somewhere abroad I know, sir," replied the footman, "but where I cannot exactly say, for I have not been very long here; but I will call the butler, and

he will be able to give you every particular;" and the man went to do so; but, returning from the inner door, added, "I beg your pardon, sir, won't you walk into the dining-room, it is so cold standing here." Cheveley at first declined upon the plea of disturbing the family; but upon the footman's hospitably negativing the supposition by an assurance that there was nobody there, as "master was ill in bed, and missus was reading to him," the temptation of entering the house in which Julia had played as a child was too great to resist, and he followed the servant in silence into the dining-room, where the man placed a chair, stirred up the fire, lighted candles, and left him, while he went in quest of the butler. The room being hung with pictures, it was not to be supposed Cheveley would remain there without looking at them, for he felt that there was one of Julia's among them; so he took one of the candles and began to explore. The first that met his view was one of Lawrence's early beauties disfigured in a white muslin window-curtain, three inches of waist, shift sleeves looped up with a cord, the remainder of the white curtain rolled round the head, with the hair coming through, or, rather, tumbling out at the top, yellow pointed slippers, and a parasol (turned back, like those which have come into fashion again) lying on the grass. Such were the details of a picture, which, nevertheless, had one of those angel faces which only Lawrence could perpetuate, and which, from its strong likeness to Fanny Neville, Cheveley concluded to be her mother. Except Lady de Clifford's, he had never seen such exquisitely beautiful hands and arms, those unmistakable quarterings of nature's heraldry; and who but Lawrence ever succeeded in infusing into canvass that pure patrician blood, that seems to flow like milk of roses through the delicately pencilled veins. He passed on, and soon came to another portrait by the same artist; but oh, how different! it was a portrait of Julia and Fanny, about the ages of twelve and sixteen, and one of Lawrence's latest and happiest efforts; the composition of the picture, like that of all his later ones, was charming. Fanny was sitting beneath a large tree on a green knoll, with a quantity of wild flowers and reeds beside her. Julia was half lying at her feet, her elbow resting on her sister's knee, and her head thrown back as it rested on one hand; in the other was a book, in

which she was evidently absorbed, while in her lap slept a beautiful but lazy little Blenheim. So intent did Julia seem upon what she was reading, that she did not appear to be aware of the Ophelia sort of decorations the mischievous Fanny was placing in her hair, or even the close vicinity of a portly velvet-looking bee, who no doubt mistook the lovely faces round which he was hovering for living flowers. In the background of the picture cattle were watering in a lake, while in the foreground were some deer, one of which stood with a fore-paw up, as though he every moment expected to *hear* the sunbeam that was darting into his scarcely less brilliant eyes: the whole picture had a sultry dreaminess about it, that made one almost fancy that one heard that low music of the summer air, the hum of insects. Opposite to this picture Cheveley stood transfixed, with a thousand conflicting and overwhelming feelings; but, with the infatuation of a genuine lover, the idea in his own mind was clearly defined, that the original, with an accumulation of years and sorrows (with a woman are they not synonymous?) was ten times more beautiful now than she had been then, with the bloom and halo of youth and happiness around her. "Ah!" thought he, "had we but met then or had we never met! Yet no, I would rather be the miserable, hopeless wretch I am, than never have known you."

So abstracted was he by this train of reflection, that the old butler had entered, cast a furtive glance at the sideboard to see whether any plate had by accident been left there, and hemmed twice without Lord Cheveley's hearing or perceiving him; but a more than usual potation of port having rendered the worthy Mr. Clinton (a domestic fixture of more than thirty years) rather averse from unnecessary standing, he at length, after taking ocular dimensions of Cheveley from head to foot, and deciding in his own mind that he certainly was a gentleman, as the footman had reported, hemmed still louder, and boldly accosted him with, "I beg your pardon, sir, but I understood you wanted to know Lady de Clifford's address?"

Not having heard Clinton's foot on the old Axminster carpet before he heard his voice, Cheveley was so startled that he nearly let the candle fall out of his hand; but, recovering his presence of mind, he said, "Oh, yes, I am sorry to have given you the trouble of coming."

"No trouble, sir," interrupted Clinton.

"But can you tell me where a parcel would find Lady de Clifford?"

"The best place, sir, would be to leave it here or at my lord's house in Grosvenor-street; as, if sent abroad, it might miscarry, as they are at present on their way home."

"Indeed!" said Cheveley; "I understood that Lady de Clifford was dangerously ill at Venice?"

"Her ladyship had been very ill there, sir," replied Clinton, "but I am happy to say the last letters from Miss Neville were from Naples, and stated that my lady was sufficiently recovered to drive out, and that the family were to be in England by the end of January."

"Thank God!" thought Cheveley; and a burning weight felt removed from his heart.

Seeing the change that came over Cheveley's face, the old butler could not help risking the question of, "You know the ladies, then, sir?"

"Yes, I have that pleasure."

"You may well call it that, sir," said the old man, wiping his eyes. "I have known them since they were born, and better or more amiable ladies never lived. As for her ladyship, she is a perfect angel, or she could not bear all she does, poor thing," added he, with a deep sigh, for which Cheveley began to think he himself was bordering on the angelic tribe; but having no farther excuse for prolonging his stay, he again thanked the old man and prepared to depart.

"Will you favour me with your name, sir?" said Clinton, with increased curiosity, as he followed him into the hall, "that I may let the ladies know who was inquiring for them?"

"Oh, it is of no consequence," said Cheveley, hurrying to the door, "as they will be in England so soon. I will call again when they arrive."

"Humph! a lover of Miss Fanny's, no doubt," thought the old man, as he cast a last glance at the marquis's handsome face and distinguished figure; "and certainly she will get a better bargain than poor Miss Julia."

Cheveley, on his return home, was too much excited to sleep, now that he had ascertained beyond a doubt that Julia was out of danger. His heart and his vanity (I fear with the best men they are closely allied)

were both satisfied at her having been ill, for he knew from experience that suffering is the only genuine ovation absence can offer to love!

CHAPTER IX.

"To curtain her sleepy world. Yon gentle hills,
Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend,
So stainless that their white glittering spires
Tinge not the moon's pure beams; yon castled steep,
Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
A metaphor of peace; all form a scene
Where musing solitude might love to lift
Her soul above this sphere of earthliness."

P. B. SHELLEY.

"La foi, se réveillant comme un doux souvenir,
Jette un rayon d'espoir sur mon pâle avenir,
Sous l'ombre de la mort me ranime et m'enflamme,
Et rend à mes vieux jours la jeunesse de l'âme."

DE LA MARTINE.

"It is hard to say which is the most ridiculous, pretensions to talent without common capacity, or pretensions to beauty after time has long presented his *trousseau* of wrinkles and crowsfeet, having taken upon each a usurious per centage of bloom and dimples!"—*A thought that often suggested itself to me when in London.*

THERE can be no doubt that external objects and extraneous circumstances are the

"Masters of passion, swayes it to the moode
Of what it likes or loathes:"

therefore is it that love, being an imaginative passion, the rough and harsh realities of life, which require all our energies to meet and to wrestle with, invariably reduce it to a degree of subordination that changes it from a tyrant to a slave; whereas idleness is the cradle of love, luxury its nurse, and liberty its tutor; indulged and encouraged by these, it becomes almost insupportable as it surfeits on its own fantasies; for, as Chaucer hath it,

"If love be searched well, and sought,
It is sickness of the thought."

And this sickness it is which blights and mildews every other wholesome blessing by which we are surrounded; making us feel, like Rasselas in the Happy Valley, that there is still an aching void, a something wanting, which vacuum all the surrounding beauty and sunshine only renders the more apparent: and it was with this "sickness of the thought" that Lord Cheveley was oppressed as he drove into his princely domain; the village bells ringing a merry peal, and bonfires gleaming from all the adjacent hills.

From the lodge to the house (a distance of about a mile and a half, through a wood) all the tenantry had assembled, and erected triumphal arches of evergreens and such flowers as the season afforded. Cold as the weather was, all the young girls being dressed in white and ranged on one side, gave a pretty and picturesque effect to the scene. Luckily for Cheveley, the shouts of the people were so deafening as they took the horses from the carriage, that it saved him the trouble of saying or doing anything but bowing right and left, with his hands pressed to his bosom; the more especially as the two gentlemen in the rumble condescendingly waved their hats, and gave cheer for cheer with the peasantry; while Mr. Sanford, in another post-chariot behind, went farther still, by not only bowing almost as affably as his master, but applying his white pocket-handkerchief to his eyes every time he did so, and occasionally leaning his head pensively against a guncase that occupied the front of the carriage.

The house, or, rather, castle at Cheveley, was built in the time of Stephen, and closely resembled the castle of Old Sarum, except that it was larger; but, like it, it was enclosed within; the same low, circular, turreted wall, the entrance to which was by a large, massy, black iron gate, studded with large spiked nails, except about a quarter of a yard square on one side, where was a cross-barred iron grate, like those of a prison or convent door; within this gate was a paved amphitheatre, in a mosaic of long bugle-shaped stones, leading up to the castle; between every third turret of this low round wall, a cannon was placed; and on the ground underneath each cannon, a pyramid of balls; from the centre of the wall on each side branched two immensely wide flights of flat stone steps, with stone balustrades, so wide and flat that two persons might with ease have

walked down them abreast; these steps inclined gradually to a half circle towards the back of the castle, terminating at the first terrace with most delicious gardens, laid out in the old Italian style, with colonnades of thick green bosquets, fountains, aviaries, square fishponds, labyrinths, and terrace above terrace; at the foot of these gardens, which occupied a perpendicular mile, was the most lovely valley that could be imagined, through which flowed a bright, babbling, dimpling stream; there was something childlike and joyous in the way this little brook dashed its crystal spray against the dull, stiff, old-maidish-looking stones, and then darted swiftly onward, as though afraid of their retaliating. This valley was full of cattle, and surrounded by hills, or rather rocks, covered with arbutus and larch; and on one side of it was a grove of linden-trees, about three quarters of a mile in length, and terminated by a park-paling, which led into a deer-park, celebrated for the beauty of its timber and the wildness of its fern. In the linden grove was a mausoleum erected to Lady Lucy Mowbray, Lord Cheveley's mother, who had made it a particular request that she might not be buried in the family vault. So sheltered was this beautiful spot, that the flowers with which it was embellished bloomed all the year round, and the soft blush of the Persian rose mingled with

> "The coy anemone, that ne'er uncloses
> Her lips until they're blown on by the wind."*

And, above all, breathed out the sweet and faithful wall-flower, to which Treneuil has said, in his beautiful lines,

> "Triomphe sans rivale, et que ta sainte fleur
> Croisse pour le tombeau, le trône, et le malheur."

The whole place gave one not the idea of death, but of the shaded sleep of the blessed, that precedes their waking in eternal light!

Above the terraced gardens rose the castle itself, like a diadem of coronected turrets, closely resembling (as I have before stated) the castle of Old Sarum in King Stephen's time.

When Cheveley entered the low armory that formed the hall, and had received and returned the salutations

* H. Smith.

of some fifty domestics, and intimated to Mr. Marshall, the steward, that he would retain them all in their different stations, he repaired to the library: it was the last room he had been in when, as a boy, his mother had been sent for to take him away for having disturbed his uncle's political musings by an ill-timed game of battledore and shuttlecock; and, certainly, politics apart, no room could be worse adapted for such an amusement, it being "cumbered o'er with carving." Old as the building was, this room, at the expense of a whole wing, had been converted into a lofty gallery: the ceiling was that of a cathedral, between all the interstices of which were emblazoned the Cheveley arms, while from the spiral roses, at equal distances, hung large silver lamps, like those used in foreign churches, each burner being in the form of the old Greek lamp. The room itself was wainscoted with old black oak, arabesqued with gold of an arras pattern; the books only occupied one side of the room, and were divided by stalls of carved oak, in each recess of which were crimson velvet seats, and over each stall was a bust. Down the opposite side of the room were four-and-twenty colossal statues in carved wood, of the early church reformers and martyrs, which the late lord had many years before brought from Holland: they were in the Michael Angelo style, and for strength and expression could not have been excelled by him. In the panels at this side of the room were inserted portraits and historical pictures: here and there was an ancestor perpetuated by Holbein, in all the dignity of forked beards, jewelled vest, and lace ruffs. The historical pictures were very large, and only four in number: the subject of one was Henry the Eighth passing from his closet through a group of courtiers, and frowning at Cardinal Wolsey, thinking he had not yet set out for Calais, while the cardinal was kneeling to present the despatches he had brought back; the expression of the king's face was so skilfully managed, that one almost fancied one saw it change from displeasure to delighted surprise. The second was King John signing the Magna Charta: the mingled looks of anxiety, resolution, and defiance in the countenances of the barons, was very fine, and the hand of the contemptible monarch seemed to tremble beneath it. The subject of the third picture was the marriage of Elizabeth of France,

daughter of Henry the Second, to Philip the Second of Spain. The Bishop of Paris, according to the custom of 1559, was performing the marriage ceremony at the door of the church of Notre Dame. This was altogether a curious picture, done on three separate panels; and the demure look of the bride, the indifferent look of the bridegroom, the mechanical look of the bishop, the "comme de raison" look of Henry the Second, the open mouths of the assembled crowd, and the perpendicular sleep of a little dog that sat on Elizabeth's train, formed a perfect mosaic of negatives. The fourth and last was somewhat of a daub, and not a very interesting subject; it was Prince Edward, son of Henry the Third, making the soldiers of Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, ride races, in order to escape from them. But over the high, old, carved chimney-piece was a "right merrie" picture of Ben Jonson carousing at the Mermaid, with Shakspeare, Herrick, and Howel; they were seated round a table covered with dropsical-looking flasks with long narrow necks, and ample glasses with tall stems.

"The rare arch-poet"

presided in a chair rather higher than the rest, with flushed face and collar somewhat awry, as though sack and sherrics had done their office. James Howel had his eyes filially turned away from his poetical sire's excesses upon a quaint-looking old book in a dilapidated cover. Not so Herrick; he seemed to think that the true source of inspiration was to be derived from seeing Ben

"Grow deeply and divinely drunk;"

while the then undeified "Will," being but of small note among them, was peering upward over his high-backed chair, as he bestowed sundry ocular civilities upon a "sweet Anne Page" looking damsel, in a pointed hat and snow-white ruff, who was enacting the part of Hebe to these choice spirits. In the window hung a magpie's cage; and through the narrow panes from the outside peeped Martin Donne and Alleyne the player, the latter twitching Donne's cloak and pointing archly to Shakspeare. There was a life in this picture that made one listen breathlessly to hear their mirth, till one turned

with a sigh to the quotation from Herrick's ode, in gilt old English letters beneath it, and asked with him—

"Ah! Ben,
Say how or when,
Shall we thy guests
Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun;
Where we such clusters had
As made us nobly wild, not mad?
And yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine!"

This room, or rather gallery, terminated in one large, deep mullion window, which overlooked the terraced gardens, while a door on the right side of the window opened into an orangery of an immense extent,

"And cheated churlish winter with sweet summer airs;"

thus creating that perfect luxury which is formed by Gothic magnificence combined with modern comfort. Cheveley sighed as he looked round this, to him, splendid banishment: there was the old, high-backed, pointed Henry the Seventh's chair, that he had last seen his poor uncle in the morning he had been expelled; there, too, were the bootekins he had so often stumbled over, and the reading-table, which, in those days, he had hated as an altar to Tacita, for never dared he either move or speak when it was drawn to the fire; and with these mementoes, the recollection of the

"Smiles, the tears of boyhood's years,"

crowded thick and fast upon him; but soon his thoughts reverted to Julia, and his heart yearned to exchange the splendid halls of his fathers for the large, dingy, comfortless rooms of Il Leone Bianco at Venice. "Ah!" thought he, "were she but mistress of this place, I could understand what people meant by calling it charming; but as it is, there is a gloom and desolation about it that is to me perfectly insupportable." As if nature herself were angry at so unjust an aspersion, a flood of golden light from the setting sun at this moment streamed through the illuminated window, and made the whole gallery gorgeous with its prismatic colours. Cheveley walked to the window: the gardens, with their green terraces and bosquets, even at that bare season, were lovely, and the snow-capped hills in the distance look-

ed like so many white-veiled vestals doing homage to the departing god of day.

Nature never appeals in vain, even to the most wretched. The door of the orangery was open: Cheveley walked through it to the gardens; the air was redolent of orange blossoms and magnolias from a neighbouring hothouse; this called to him his mother's love of flowers in general, and these flowers in particular, and his heart was in his eyes as he mechanically bent his steps towards her grave in the grove of lindens. He paused when he came to the little brook, and stood and listened to it, for it spoke to him of other days: on its margin how often had he played, while his mother had sat reading under a large hospitable tree, now leafless, but bright with the setting sun, which, like an eastern monarch, was sinking into his bed of gold, while the silver crescent of the young moon had risen in the clear cold sky to take his place. "Yes, the tree is there still," said he, thinking aloud, "but where is she now? *There*, if ever mortal was," added Cheveley, as he raised his eyes to heaven, where the pale, gentle-looking moon shone out like an emblem of purity and peace. A herd coming to water the cattle, he walked on, and turned down the avenue of lindens. How subjugating, yet exalting, are the feelings with which the graves of those we love inspire us; there our dust suffers till it seems brought as low as theirs. We weep, we struggle, we upbraid our mother earth, but there also we pray, till our spirit soars to God, and to theirs. There is a turbulence in sin that we feel would disturb our eternal rest; and as our thoughts bear our hearts upward, we resolve to renounce it, for the passions sleep when conscience awakes, and amid the silence of death we distinctly hear "her still, small voice;" but, alas! back in the busy world again, among its turmoils and its temptations, she in her turn sleeps, and the counsel we took with the sainted dead is forgotten or weakened by the aggressions and example of the living. Many were the tears that Cheveley shed at his mother's grave, although it was six years since her death; and, with the true waywardness of sorrow, at one moment he thanked God that she was spared the knowledge of all his present sufferings, while the next he wished her back on earth to cheer and console him; and yet she could not have done either, for, albeit, unlike Lord de Clifford's

mother, he dared not have made her the confidant of the unhallowed love that was consuming him; or if he had, he would have received neither consolation nor encouragement. So long had he lingered in the grove of lindens, that it was nearly eight o'clock when he returned to the castle, where his solitary dinner awaited him; it was almost an unnecessary ceremony his sitting down to it, for eat he could not. The dining-room looked into the park; he undrew the window curtain, and sat in the window, listening abstractedly to the noise of the deer beneath it. His thoughts, from habit, flew back to Venice, then again they reverted to his mother: he saw her as he had seen her last; her parting "God bless you" rang in his ear, and he became involved in a thousand metaphysical speculations as he gazed upon the skies, and read

"The gospel of the stars, great nature's holy writ;"

and whoever did so without longing to be as one of them, far from this dull earth, a light with God in heaven? At length Cheveley rose and returned to the library. "I will try and read," said he; and accordingly he took down one book after another, but his thoughts wandered, and by the time he got to the end of a page he did not know one word that was in it. He took up a pen to write to Saville, when he recollected that he would be in England before the letter could reach him; but out of the fulness of the heart the pen, as well as the mouth, speaketh, and he wrote the following lines:

"Near where the bee-loved lindens* fling
Their deep and odorous shade,
And the first roses of the spring
Blush through the emerald glade,

There dost thou sleep, sweet mother, mine;
And as calmly, purely bright
Be every joy that now is thine,
As thou wert to my mortal sight.

No more! no more! this heart can feel,
As when erst thy dovelike voice
Would o'er its troubled waters steal
With fresh hopes that said 'rejoice!'

* See Virgil's beautiful description of the industrious corycian, where he notices the love of bees for the flower of the linden or lime-tree.

But then the love I felt was bliss,
For 'twas love of God and thee;
Now 'tis a deep and dark abyss
Of sin, grief, and misery;

Of sin wrought through angelic power,
As when of old, daughters of earth
Saw in a bright but fatal hour,
Fair forms of heavenly birth.

And tempting angels from their sphere
Turn'd to guilt seraphic love,
Which made them hopeless wanderers here,
And branded exiles from above.

Yet mother! gentle mother! no,
All *thy* love has not been lost;
Guilt has not wreck'd, though passion's flow
Leaves my spirit tempest toss'd.

For how can I forget the care
That you lavish'd on my youth?
The morning walk, the evening prayer,
Then the kiss for telling truth!

Still do I see thee, as of old,
Reading 'neath some fav'rite tree,
Old Spenser's page of green and gold,
Stereotyped in Faërie.

While Dash, and Bell, and I would play,
And roll on the velvet green,
With noise enough to scare away
The moth-wing'd 'Faërie Queen.'

Till lured back by thy gentle call
(Ah! 'twas never heard in vain),
The panting dogs, spoil'd boy, and all,
First were chid, then kiss'd again.

The very daisy chains you twined,
Then to keep your urchin still,
Doth yet his wayward spirit bind,
Now to do what *was* your will.

I often think perchance the dead,
Silent vigils o'er us keep,
And by them we're safely led
Through paths o'er which we vainly weep.

Yet again I've ask'd, in hallow'd ground,
Their dust beneath, their souls above us,
Mid the immortal joys they've found,
If still they know, if still they love us?"

About a fortnight after Cheveley had been in the country, he went over to Campfield to dine at Lord Sudbury's, who, at the time, had the house filled with

Christmas guests. Lord Sudbury was a good little man in his way, for he never got in any one else's way; and that, in this world, is a virtue. Nature and chance had certainly had a difference of opinion about him, as the former had decided that he should not be one of her nobility, while the latter decreed that he should be one of ours. In person he was short, and what the common Irish expressively term "*unsignified*," being something between an English hair-dresser's appearance and the garçon of a French café; but he never did any harm, as far as a man can be said to be guiltless of it who never does any good. Her ladyship was called, among her own clique, a "very superior woman," for her personal attractions never jostled any one's, having a face like one of Don Quixote's unavailing regrets, and a figure long and heavy as one of Sancho's slumbers; add to which, there was a deep cerulean tinge in her character, that propelled her into reading scientific books that she did not understand, and talking of them afterward. She was a great admirer of what the world stuccoes with the name of "talent," that is, provided Fame had stamped the ore as current; for as to playing the Columbus to any one's mind, that was beyond her, as, indeed, it is beyond most women; for they generally see with other people's eyes, hear with other people's ears, decide with other people's judgment, and parrot forth other people's opinions.

When Lord Cheveley arrived, the assembled group consisted of the Duke and Duchess of Darlington. The duchess was a handsome blonde, always dressed to perfection, with a very sweet countenance and gentle manner. The duke was a duke, and what more need any man be? As he had never done any one any harm, I would fain say nothing against him; but truth compels me to own that he was a Whig. Yet, for that matter, so is the Duke of Devonshire; and every one who knows him likes and esteems him with reason; and as for his politics, they only prove that the best are liable to error, and that there is nothing perfect in this best of all possible worlds. Though Lord Sudbury was an ultra Tory, Christmas, like death, levelled all distinctions at Campfield: so that, at the moment of Cheveley's entrée, Mr. Spoonbill had full possession of Mr. Tom Dareall's button, the Radical member for one of the metropolitan boroughs, discussing the eternal

subject of Lord Denham, and little dreaming how scurvily his dear friends the Whigs were actually using him, or the disgraceful exposé that a few months would make.

Mr. Tom Dareall was most popular both among the ladies and the Levites, and was a perfect Sheridan in his management of those intricate and troublesome human burrs called creditors. His toilet was always unexceptionable, and his turnout exceedingly clever, as he generally *drove duns:* in short, he was one of those men who had never been, and would never, at any epoch of his life, be called "Mister." Even in the mouths of young ladies he was "Tom Dareall," being a favourite with every one except Mr. Herbert Grimstone, whom he had once ousted at Triverton.

On an ottoman sat Lord St. Leger, a young man of moderate capacity and immoderate fortune, who was thought literary by the young ladies in Belgrave Square and May Fair, from the fact of his having contributed a little inanity to "the Book of Beauty" and divers annuals, which had been duly lauded in "the Investigator," and other impartial and independent papers, as being "exceedingly graceful, and evincing much genuine talent." Being one of the best "parties" in England, he was now surrounded by a group of young ladies, who laughed at and admired everything he said as though he had talked diamonds and pearls. But hunger will make the brightest and lightest spirits philosophical and reflective; so his lordship, with a yawn, hazarded the very novel remark of how long and stupid the half hour before dinner always appeared! upon which, with an invulnerable vanity, which did them great credit, inasmuch as that it was not in the least wounded at this ungallant speech, the first young lady said, in a stage whisper, to her companions behind his lordship, which resounded from the three other young ladies like the triple echo at Killarney, "What a clever creature he is!" "And so handsome!" added the first speaker, who had been out six years, and was dressing, and growing younger in consequence. Lord St. Leger thought the half hour before dinner not so stupid, after all; and that Harriet Winterberry (the last speaker) "really was a very fine girl"—"woman" would have been the more appropriate term; but, as I have before said, his lordship was in the habit of writing for the

annuals, and no doubt that made him imaginative; and certainly "girl" was a more poetical word than "woman."

In a priedieu at a little distance from this group, sat a little woman, with sharp features and a sharper voice; a tall man stood by her, leaning listlessly on the back of the priedieu, talking Greek to her, inasmuch as he was expatiating upon the thrilling interest and masterly anatomy of human nature in that most powerfully written and wonderful book, "Oliver Twist."

"Never," said he, "did any book take such complete possession of me as that. Sleeping or waking, I had poor Oliver's pale face still before me. I never asked a question but what it seemed answered with the Dodger's antithetical 'Oh, no.' My dreams were still darkened by the ruffian Sikes, or infected by the villanous old Jew; and every pool I passed in the street seemed to be red with poor Nancy's blood: in short," concluded Mr. Vavasor, "I would rather know Dickens than any living author; for although he does occasionally write beautiful sentiments that seem to evince deep feeling, yet I am convinced that he has a heart, and that it is in the right place."

"Why, of course," replied the lady with the sharp voice, "if he writes beautiful sentiments that show deep feeling, that proves he has a heart. So, begging your pardon, Mr. Vavasor, though you may be a very clever man, I think you are talking great nonsense; for how can people write feelings if they haven't them?"

Mr. Vavasor smiled somewhat contemptuously at the lady's logic, and contented himself with repeating, "Yes, that 'Oliver Twist' is a wonderful book."

"Hem; I almost forgot it; something about a boy in a workhouse, isn't it?" asked the sharp voice.

Mr. Vavasor changed the subject in despair, but hit upon one almost as bad, being more intellectual. "Have you seen Charles Kean's 'Hamlet?' is it not perfect?"

Now the lady with the sharp voice, having no personal or individual *judgment*, was determined to compromise the matter by always having an *opinion* of her own; and therefore replied fiatically,

"Why, I don't think he's as wonderful as some of the papers say, or as bad as others say; there's always a medium, you know."

Mr. Vavasor removed himself to the other end of the

room, and took refuge behind one of the county ladies, who sat fat and fidgety on the edge of her chair, in a thick brocade gown and a profusion of blonde (now that both are out of fashion), not venturing to look to the right or the left except when her husband, who stood near her, a portly man in a blue coat, gilt buttons, and white waistcoat, occasionally stooped down and whispered, "there, my dear, that's the duchess sitting next her ladyship on the sofa;" or, "I wonder how long it will be before we have dinner?"

Lady Sudbury and the Duchess of Darlington occupied one sofa, and between them sat a beautiful little Blenheim dog of the name of Juan; his large, black, eastern eyes looking languidly round, as though he was bored to death, and wondered with Mr. Palmer (the county gentleman) when dinner would be ready; one paw rested on Lady Sudbury's soft green velvet dress, while she stroked one of his long, silken, Titian-like ears, and complained to the duchess of the dreadful headaches she had had lately.

"It's your mind, dear Lady Sudbury," said her grace, with a half smile; "you really study too much."

"Have you seen," inquired Lady Sudbury, modestly waiving the accusation, "have you seen this new American author, Mr. Snobguess?"

"No," replied the duchess.

"Oh, you should see him," said Lady Sudbury, "for he is writing a book about England, and means to mention all the beauties; but he is to be here to-day; Lady Stepastray, who, you know, has a perfect menagerie of lions always about her, is to bring him to dinner, and they stay till after Christmas; I told her to tell him that he must not be disappointed if he finds me very dull, for I have been suffering so much with my head lately."

While Lady Sudbury was still speaking, a page advanced, and when she had ceased, announced Lady Stepastray and Mr. Snobguess. The latter, having been duly presented by the former, made his best Broadway bow, and said,

"I'm sorry, *my lady*, to hear that you've not been quite roight (right) about the head lately."

The duchess smiled; Lady Sudbury looked notes of interrogation, and Mr. Rufus Snobguess came to a full stop by seizing poor little Juan's unoccupied ear; which piece of low-bred Yankee familiarity naturally roused

his Blenheim blood and set him howling. Reader, hast ever seen a shepherdess worked in a sampler, looking down upon a pet lamb with a look of softness and vacuity, produced by the reflection of green silk grass three inches below her eyes, studded with pink silk roses waving one inch above her hat and crook? if so, exert thy memory to recall the vision; this done, stretch thy imagination to the contemplation of the same shepherdess evaporating on a bank of primroses, and you will behold the intellectual and ethereal Lady Stepastray; there was a feline gentleness in her ladyship's manner, a mewing softness in her ladyship's voice, that was perfectly entrapping. She had a graceful habit of crossing her left hand over her right wrist, and then drawing both in towards her chest, that gave a picturesque air to her whole figure, between that of a Magdalene and a Morris-dancer. Some forty years ago, she had, through the medium of a Scotch divorce, disembarrassed herself of her first husband; and so well had this severe discipline agreed with him, that he was still walking about and merry, long after the silent tomb had received his successor. An interesting youth, now about two-and-forty, was the result of her ladyship's first marriage; but her feelings were of that refined and delicate nature, that she seldom saw him, and few had ever heard of him; whether it was the almost infantine simplicity of her thoughts that continued to impart such youth to her appearance, I cannot take upon me to say; but certain it is, that it seemed as if she and Time had thrown for victory, and that she had decidedly won. Seeming to think that death was out of the question for her, she compromised the matter by dying her hair and rejuvinating her dress every year; and though she had not entirely left off love, she had within the last ten years taken to literature, and written some charming works; one called the "Chamberlain's Daughter," and another the "Old Road to Ruin," which, considering she had been going it for the last fifty years, she could not have possibly selected a subject with which she was more conversant; having for a similar number of years thoroughly wormed herself, by falsehood, flattery, and accommodating conduct, into the good graces of every one, either in society or literature, whom she thought worth toadying; her plan being, like that of the illustrious Roman who stood aloof on the top of the hill

till he saw which side victory favoured, to be neuter in all differences, conjugal or otherwise, till she saw which party was the strongest, and then join that. However, I'm sure this only arose from her love of being in the fashion; for however kind one may have been to people, however great and continued the benefits one may have bestowed upon them, and however inordinate their expressions and professions of gratitude may be, let but misfortune come to us, and, like a blot of ink upon a fair transcript, it seems to obliterate everything. As I have never yet met with any one who had succeeded in reading her ladyship's books, it may be interesting to know the style of her writings: this they may do through a very delightful medium, that of reading the ninth number of Nicholas Nickleby, as the "Chamberlain's Daughter" and the "Old Road to Ruin" were precisely in the same milk-and-water-run-mad school of "The Lady Flabella;" that charming novel which Kate Nickleby read out to Mrs. Wititterly, and which that lady thought "so soft," while Kate (a point in which most persons will be likely to agree with her) thought it "very soft."

However, thanks to her dinners, and Fuzboz's good digestion and consequent gratitude, he had manufactured a charming biography of "this gifted lady," accompanied by a youthful portrait, for one of the magazines. In this interesting life, the first husband and the old son were both carefully suppressed, or, rather, lopped off as useless excrescences with which the public had nothing to do; and then Fuzboz proceeded to inform them that her ladyship's thirst for knowledge (that abstruse and metaphysical knowledge beyond the capacity of most of her sex) had burst forth in uncontrollable force even from her earliest infancy; no wonder, then, that it had been quenched by such deep draughts from the "Pierian spring," when we consider the length of time that had elapsed from that period up to the present. So that Fuzboz's concluding peroration, bidding the world wonder at and admire the result of her ladyship's studies, was almost superfluous. At the advent of each succeeding work (piece of work would be a more appropriate term, as they had always to be "done in English by several hands," as the poor publisher knew to his cost, though to do them into sense was a miracle beyond the power of modern times); well, at the advent

of each succeeding work, Lady Stepastray was sure to possess herself of a classical gold inkstand, or a costly jewelled pen, or sometimes both, which were paraded to the fashionable and literary world by turns, varying their history for each as to authors and authors' wives. It was "Look, my dear Mr. or Mrs. So and So, the dear Duke of —— (naming a royal duke) sent me these the other day, with such a pretty letter, thanking me for my book, and saying that, as no one made such good use of their pen, he must send me these implements for writing in the hope of inducing me to write more; now it was so very prettily expressed you can't think!" The lords and ladies heard the same story in their turn, with this difference, that the royal duke was changed to "the celebrated author of so and so;" but this sometimes entailed another addition, as her auditor would exclaim, "Dear Lady Stepastray, do show me the letter, for I should so like to see his handwriting:" whereupon her ladyship was overpowered with a very natural confusion, and looking blush-ways, simpered out, "Oh, I thought it looked so vain to keep it, that I burned it."

Next to being a genius, Lady Stepastray was determined to grow into a young beauty, and it was curious to see the dexterity with which she contrived to give people notice of this, by wrapping up the fact in a pretended insult. Thus she would, *à propos de bottes*, say to some blooming beauty of nineteen, "dear Lady Jane," or Caroline, as the case might be, "you are much too beautiful to go through this world without envy and ill-nature; people are so ill-natured; only think of Lady M. saying to me the other day, 'ah! it's all very fine, Lady Stepastray, but I'm certain the men would never read your books as they do if you were not such a pretty woman!' Now, so very ill-natured, you know, because reviewers (with a great emphasis on the word) don't care whether one is pretty or not; but, the fact is, Lady M. being an authoress herself, she is jealous of me!"

Another very ingenious device of Lady Stepastray's was silently to claim the authorship of every very clever book that came out anonymously: this she achieved by looking confused, or abruptly changing the subject when the merits of the work were discussed; or if any one remarked, "It is evidently in so and so's style, and, after all, I think it must be theirs," she would

look down with a conscious smile and murmur, "No, no, it is not Mr. B.'s or Mrs. G.'s, I have reason to know;" and then, if laughingly taxed by her auditors, who knew full well she could not write such a book, with the authorship, she would playfully tap them on the wrist, and smilingly walk away as she said, "What right have you to suppose it's mine? I have not owned it. Now pray don't go and say that I wrote it, for I—I mean the person who wrote it—I know, wishes it to be kept a profound secret!"

Lady Stepastray, as soon as she had dulcified sufficiently with Lady Sudbury and the duchess, glided across the room, and professed herself overwhelmed with delight to see *dear* Lord Cheveley; and so far she was sincere, that she really was always rejoiced to see any one that was either great, or rich, or celebrated. Cheveley was truly grateful when dinner was announced, as it relieved him from the "fadeurs" of Lady Stepastray, whose talk was about as piquante as cold veal without salt. Lord Sudbury, having passed on with the Duchess of Darlington, and the Duke with Lady Sudbury, it became Cheveley's turn to offer his arm to Lady Florence Lindley, Lord Sudbury's sister, a handsome and agreeable woman of about thirty, who seemed the only person unconscious of these two qualifications; the young ladies being distributed between Lord St. Leger, Tom Dareall, and Mr. Palmer, while Mrs. Palmer availed herself of the benefit of clergy in the chaplain's left arm. Lady Stepastray fell to the lot of Mr. Spoonbill, and catching a glimpse of Mrs. Palmer athwart that gentleman's voluminous shirt-frill, had barely time to dole out a homœopathic dose of civility suited to a country gentleman's wife, in the form of a slight and distant bow, when she perceived her "protegé," Mr. Snobguess, towing himself after her.

"'Pon honour! *my lady*," said he, sidling up to her, "this *aint* treating us according to Hoyle though, neither; for I think there should be a lady to every gentleman."

"And so there is a lady to every *gentleman*," said Mr. Spoonbill, tartly, as he took a rapid survey of Mr. Snobguess's disjointed figure, French-polished mangle-wurzel-looking face, and the lock of hair, enclosed in a square sarcophagus of pearls, that decorated his shirt.

"Mr. Spoonbill, Mr. Snobguess, the celebrated Amer-

ican author," tittered Lady Stepastray, slightly pressing Mr. Spoonbill's arm as an admonition to be more civil.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Snobguess, winking his right eye and wagging his head, without taking any further notice of the introduction; "you're provided for, fast enough, sir, and those may laugh that win."

Upon entering the dining-room, Lady Stepastray contrived to place herself on one side of Lord Cheveley, while Mr. Spoonbill sat on her right hand; and, much to his annoyance, Mr. Snobguess planted himself on his right. But, with the best intentions in the world upon the part of Lady Stepastray, Lady Florence made herself so agreeable to Cheveley, as her chief conversation consisted in praising and asking questions about "dear" Lady de Clifford, that poor Lady Stepastray was fain to content herself with "taste, Shakspeare, high-life, the music-glasses," and Mr. Spoonbill.

"Well!" said Mr. Snobguess, looking round the table, "if this aint for all the world like a Turkish bazar."

"How so?" simpered Lady Stepastray.

"Why, because there's something of every *think*; there's gold plate enough for half a dozen Delhi merchants; then the fruit growing, as it were, out of the table; and the meat, fish, poultry, and vegetables, that keep *con*tinually coming round, to say nothin*k* of the ladies, whom I guess are as much slaves in England as in Turkey, makes it *eg-zac*ly a Turkish bazar."

"Yes, yes, what a very original idea!" said Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands and looking admiringly up into Mr. Snobguess's face; "I do hope you'll put that in your book."

"I'll make a note of it, sure-*ly*," replied Snobguess. But the word "book" seemed to awaken some remembrance; for, immediately after, he conveyed something from his coat-pocket under his napkin; and a sort of rumbling, rustling noise commenced, which excited Mr. Spoonbill's curiosity. Ever and anon he cast a wistful glance towards Mr. Snobguess's lap; at length he thought he perceived a small book! and he did perceive one, for that very morning, preparatory to his visit to Campfield, Mr. Snobguess had expended a shilling upon a book called "Etiquette for Gentlemen!" and, with an ingenuity peculiar to genius, he was now filling up the insterstices of time by discussing mutton and manners at one and the same moment.

Shortly after the discovery of the book, Mr. Spoonbill observed that Mr. Snobguess's head kept bobbing and ducking at a tremendous rate; the fact was, the plateau was very large, as it consisted of a copy of the bronze horses at Monte Cavallo, and this intercepted his view of the people on the opposite side of the table, among whom was Lady Sudbury. But at length, catching a glimpse of her, he held up a wineglass, against which he jingled a fork, the better to call attention, as he roared out, in a loud voice, "The pleasure of wine with you, *my lady*." It was with difficulty that every one suppressed their laughter, while Lady Sudbury seemed almost too much surprised to bow an acknowledgment of Mr. Snobguess's "polite attention!" which he was about to extend to Lady Stepastray, when Mr. Spoonbill, turning to her at the same moment to conceal his laughter, prevented her seeing or returning Mr. Snobguess's nod; whereupon he exclained, theatrically, giving Mr. Spoonbill a dig in the side,

"'You give me most egregious indignity.'"

At this Mr. Spoonbill, who was half inclined to resent such undesired or undeserved familiarity, turned quickly round; but, thinking better of it, answered from the same play,

"'Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy of it.'"

After this Mr. Snobguess became too much interested in his dinner to talk any more; and the conversation between Lady Stepastray and Mr. Spoonbill turning upon pictures, and the latter happening to say he should much like to see a very fine Annibal Caracci that he understood had been recently added to the gallery at Cheveley Place, Lord Cheveley introduced himself by saying he should be happy to show it to him any day he would come over to Cheveley. Mr. Spoonbill thanked him, and, as he did so, thought he had seen his face somewhere before, but had not the slightest suspicion that he was indebted to his defence of Lady de Clifford at the Athenæum for Lord Cheveley's evident good-will towards him. So little do any of us know the motives, or shades of motives, that actuate persons in society in their conduct towards us; often originating in ourselves, and taking their tone from the word or look we may have hazarded for or against them, at times and places long since forgotten by us.

In the evening Lady Stepastray was determined to

appropriate Lord Cheveley to herself; and when some of the party had sat down to cards, and others had repaired to the music gallery, she seated herself beside him, and gracefully crossing her hands, as was her wont, mewed out a mingled lament and panegyric upon the late Lord Cheveley.

"Yes, yes, my dear Lord Cheveley," she began, "your uncle died in such a thorough-bred way, so like a gentleman, as he had lived. Do you know he had been reading my book, 'The Old Road to Ruin,' and he said to his man, 'Zounds, I have torn a leaf out of Lady Stepastray's book: get it rebound;' and he sank back and died."

"I'm not surprised," said Cheveley, with a mingled feeling of contempt and disgust, that made him order his carriage as the servant took Lady Stepastray's teacup.

The night was clear and cold, and the sky gemmed with stars, that looked brighter and farther from the earth than usual; before he reached home, Cheveley had decided in his own mind that, since his return to England, he had only met two persons worth knowing: Lady Florence Lindley and Mr. Spoonbill.

CHAPTER X.

"Parvum parva decent."

"Take an old woman and roast her well,
And baste her well with cheese,
And put her out of a frosty night, and ten to one but she'll freeze;
Take her in the next morning,
And rub her down with straw,
And put her by the fireside, 'tis ten to one but she'll thaw."
Nursery Anthology.

"Talking of age," says one of our Sir Oracles, "the longer women live the younger they grow. I know ladies who six years ago rated at thirty-five, and who now stand at twenty-nine. It is next to impossible for a woman to get over forty. This is the 'pons asinorum' at which the sex invariably stick. The only person I ever met with who confessed she had passed this barrier, was an old lady of eighty; but then her great-grandson was a lad of eighteen."

It was towards the end of February; the De Cliffords had been in England about a month, and Fanny and Saville were to be married in a fortnight; after which

time Lady de Clifford had received notice that she was to go down to Grimstone, for Lord de Clifford had entered into a new "liaison." He seemed to have a predilection for governesses, for Mademoiselle d'Antoville's successor was a Devonshire woman, who had kept a school at Sidmouth; but, what was exceedingly convenient, her brother was a low writer for the press, which, while it secured puffing on the one hand, also guarantied the suppression of all disagreeable truths on the other, and enabled Lord de Clifford to give whatever colouring he pleased to his own actions; besides, having many plans to organize prior to the next election, every day convinced him more and more of the expediency and truth of his exemplary parent's assertion, that he would be much freer and better living "*ong gorsong*." Owing to Fanny's marriage, he was unable to carry this point as soon as he could have wished; but, the day after that event, everything was arranged for Lady de Clifford's departure.

It was a cold, gloomy morning in February; Lord de Clifford had been closeted for a long time in the library with Miles Datchet, who at length left the house, looking agitated and thoughtful beyond measure, to the infinite surprise of the servants, who had always seen and thought him the merriest soul living. Shortly after, Lord de Clifford also went out; but his head was higher, and his step, if possible, more pompous than usual.

In the drawing-room were assembled Fanny, Saville, and Herbert Grimstone, who, however, was yawning over the fire, preparatory to his going down to his mother's in Bruton-street, with whom he had a little business, from which he hoped to reap *sterling* benefit. The fact was, that some literary cronies of his had requested him to procure Lady de Clifford's picture and that of her child for the "Book of Beauty," or the "Gems," or the something of beauty; upon which Herbert had informed them that his brother detested anything like publicity for his wife, but that, if they would insert a portrait of his mother instead, this would greatly oblige them, and he would take care to get the book additionally puffed when it came out. Mr. Snobguess had also read him a glowing panegyric upon Lady de Clifford and her sister from his book, in which he had declared they were "*exceeding* fine women, and would even be thought such in New-York." Herbert pressed

his hand, thanked him with tears in his eyes, and said that nothing could give *him*, individually, more pleasure than to hear his sister-in-law's praises, but that he knew his brother's rooted aversion to having any public mention made of his wife; if, therefore, Mr. Snobguess could obliterate the passage, and, without taking up more room in his valuable work, transfer the eulogium to the dowager, encircling the whole with a comparison about the mother of the Gracchi, and hint that they, the Gracchi ('Anglice,' Grimstones), derived all their extraordinary talents from her, it would be much more acceptable, and he and his brother would be happy to do anything for Mr. Snobguess in return. "You understand, my dear sir," continued Herbert, in a filial and affectionate voice, "I would not ask you to allude to us or our humble talents, whatever they may be, but on my mother's account; and to please her is my brother's and my constant study."

Mr. Snobguess declared that he was *cruel dutiful*, and that it did him *uncommon* credit; and that, though he was sorry to leave the other ladies out, as he had considered them *quite the go!* the alteration should be made.

Now it was to impart this intelligence to his mother, and to accompany her to Chalon's to sit for her portrait, that Mr. Herbert Grimstone was refreshing himself over the fire with a few invigorating yawns previous to his departure for Bruton-street: pushing his hat back, and stretching his arms above his head for the third time, he exclaimed, as if in answer to his own thoughts,

"'Pon my soul, I don't know what they're about; I can't conceive why they don't do something for me and De Clifford! I hear Denham is devilishly discontented out there, too."

Though this speech was evidently a soliloquy, and not addressed to him, Saville replied, "Why, you can hardly expect great advancement just yet; you must go a step beyond Timbuctoo, and write a book proving, or, rather, arguing, that the height of virtue consists in breaking every commandment; or else, what is better, do it; for that, nowadays, is the surest stepping-stone to literary or political advancement; let me see—unfortunately, you have no wife, nor children, nor sisters. I have it," cried Saville, in a Eurika tone; "go off with your mother."

"I have always heard," said Fanny, with great solemnity, looking up from the table where she was writing, "that crime carries its own punishment along with it; but that would be *proving* it with a vengeance!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he dragged himself out of the room; for the joke being only against his mother, he enjoyed it as much as any one.

After that amiable and exemplary lady had been made acquainted with the purport of her son's visit, long and varying was the consultation that took place as to what dress and attitude she should sit for her picture in.

"I think, my dear mamma," ventured Herbert at last, "you never look so well as when you are writing; your eyelids are so remarkably handsome; there, so," continued he, taking up a pen, and accidentally, on purpose, pushing over a banker's book that was lying on the table, on which he began to write pantomimically.

His dear mamma took the pen, and in good earnest wrote him a draught for a thousand pounds. "There, my dear," said she, pushing it over to him, "I know young men have many expenses, and this may be of use to you; but do not mention it to your brother, as his wife might hear it; and I was saying the other day that I thought she could do very well without carriage horses when she got down to Grimstone; so, you understand, it is as well not."

"My dear mamma," said Herbert, gallantly kissing his revered parent's hand, "I always consider everything you say to me as sacred, and I believe you have never found me betray your confidence, so you may take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds; but," added he, smiling, "I assure you, when I began designing the pose of your picture, I had no idea I was such a good *draughtsman!*"

Her ladyship's brain being invariably pun-proof, she merely replied,

"Ah, my dear, you always *was* vaustly clever at drawing."

"Yes, my dear mamma, I certainly have *drawn* a great deal in my time, but it is a propensity I should wish you to *check*, at least as far as etchings go."

"Tut, tut, my dear, it is a delightful talent, and it does you great credit to get through so much."

"I do not know; one's resources get exhausted at

last, and, for my part, I would rather have a 'carte blanche' than the finest drawings in the world."

"With your talents, my dear Herbert, to be so modest, does great credit to your head and *hort!*"

"Talent, my dear mamma, as Snobguess the American author was explaining to me to-day, is invariably derived from the mother, so I may have some pretensions to it."

"Very just observation, my dear, for your father was a perfect fool."

"Poor man, so I should think," thought Herbert; but he did not say it, for his mother had from infancy instilled into him that the truth ought not to be spoken at all times.

After a few more maternal and filial compliments, it was decided that her ladyship should go to Madame Girardot's to choose a headdress for her picture. Herbert did not much relish the idea of being boxed up in a close carriage with his dear mamma, and terminating the day with a five o'clock dinner: but still, a thousand pounds are not to be got for nothing; and as Parliament had opened with a very stormy session, in which the magnates had followed Locke's educational advice of "*laying on the blows with reasoning between*," he would have a good excuse for getting away soon after dinner.

"My dear," said the dowager, "you must come with me to Madame Girardot's, for I am not much in the habit of going *to these here* sort of milliners, as Frump generally makes all my caps and bonnets; but you see so many French ladies, that you will be able to choose me something *degaugée* and pretty."

"My dear mamma, I know no one who has such good taste in dress as yourself; but I shall be happy to accompany you."

Accordingly, to Madame Girardot's they drove; and the dowager having paused on the stairs to remark "how *vaustly* impertinent it was of such people to have mahogany doors and window frames," proceeded to the showroom, where Lady Sudbury and Lady Stepastray were trying on things, the former a *Ceres* velvet toque, the latter a sort of zephyr cap, on every web of which fifteen was stamped. Madame Girardot, who had been arranging the folds of the Ceres toque, and assuring Lady Sudbury that she looked "charmante," while Madlle. Mélanie, her coadjutor, was agreeing with

Lady Stepastray that she looked "jolie à ravir dans le petit bonnet de nymphe," now paused, and replacing her hands in her apron pockets, and peering round the dowager as though she had been scrutinizing the inmate of a den in the Zoological Gardens, never even condescended to ask her what she wanted. Lady Sudbury, though perfectly acquainted with her by sight, that is, as *the mad old Lady de Clifford, who had quarrelled with the whole county*, now raised her "lorgnette," and investigated her more minutely than madame could possibly do with the naked eye. Meanwhile Lady Stepastray advanced towards Herbert, with

> "The gliding, undulating motion
> Which steps, but treads not;"

and having received his assurances that she was looking more beautiful than ever, she cast an inquiring glance towards his mother. Now, like all persons who from oddity, temper, conduct, or any other cause, knew nobody, the dowager was exceedingly tenacious about her son not introducing her to every one they knew; and Lady Stepastray being just the person he could venture to introduce her to, he began, in a voice nearly as dulcet as her own,

"My dear Lady Stepastray, as I understand you and my mother are both to appear in Snobguess's forthcoming work, will you allow me to make you personally known to each other?"

"I shall be most happy, my dear Mr. Grimstone."

"My dear mamma," whispered Herbert, "Lady Stepastray is *so* anxious to be introduced to you; may I introduce her? I think you've read her books, 'The Old Road to Ruin,' and 'The Chamberlain's Daughter.'"

"Oh, dear, yes, to be sure, and vaustly interesting they were."

"Well, then, I may introduce her to you?"

"Certainly."

"My mother, Lady de Clifford—Lady Stepastray."

"I'm charmed to make your acquaintance, Lady de Clifford," mewed Lady Stepastray; "for I'm such an admirer of your son's talents."

"I'm sure, with regard to talent, nobody has greater *pretensions* than your ladyship," grinned the dowager.

"No, no, my dear Lady de Clifford, you are very good to say so; but I am cramped. My natural bent

is theology and metaphysics; but novels, you see, are the only things that go down now; so I'm obliged to write them 'malgré moi.'"

"And I'm sure no novels can go down (!) faster than your ladyship's; but I'm detaining you from your purchases," bobbed the dowager, as she moved away to the other end of the room, where, disencumbering herself of Frump's amateur bonnet, she desired, Madame Girardot to produce some of her newest and most "recherché" headdresses; but whether it was that her ladyship's French sounded to madame's Parisian ears like Hebrew, and that, consequently, she read it backward, I know not; but certain it is that she excavated some of the very dowdiest and dingiest of her last year's hats and toques; and having strongly recommended the ugliest of the batch, for which she modestly asked treble its original price, she was listlessly proceeding to wrap it up in silver paper, when Lady Sudbury walked up to her, and said, in a languid and impertinent voice, sufficiently loud for the dowager to hear,

"'Qui est cette personnage?'"

Girardot, without raising her eyes from the parcel she was arranging, flung one glance round the corner at Lady de Clifford, as she replied, with a contemptuous curl of her upper lip,

"Ca? ça? n'as pas de nom!"

"Devilish good," thought Herbert, in his own mind; but fearing his mother might not be of the same opinion, he looked at his watch, and said,

"My dear mamma, I fear we shall not have time for Chalon's to day, for it is half past four now; we dine at five, and I must be down at the house by seven."

"Oh, very well, my dear; the best way will be for us to go straight home." And bobbing across the room to Lady Stepastray, she took her son's arm, who, pressing her hand as he helped her into the carriage, told her "That he admired her taste exceedingly in the hat she had selected, as nothing could be more becoming."

On arriving in Bruton-street, he inquired if his groom was there; and being answered in the affirmative, he ordered his cabriolet to be at the door punctually at seven. Nothing of any moment occurred at dinner, except that the venison was too high; at which her

ladyship expressed her indignation, by turning sharply round to Croaker, and saying,

"This *here* venison is perfectly uneatable; the servants may have it!"

CHAPTER XI.

"They lived together for a long time in the greatest unity, *although* they had married for love."—*Fairy Tale of the Princess Lumineuse.*

"The perception of a woman is quick as lightning. Her penetration is intuition, almost instinct. By a glance she will draw a deep and just conclusion: ask her how she formed it, and she cannot answer the question. A philosopher deduces inferences, and his inferences shall be right; but he gets to the head of the staircase, if I may so say, by slow degrees, mounting step by step. She arrives at the top of the staircase as well as he; but whether she flew there is more than she knows herself. While she trusts her instinct, she is scarcely ever deceived; but she is generally lost when she begins to reason."—SHERLOCK.

"Ich habe genossen das irdische glück,
Ich habe gelebt und geliebet."

WALLENSTEIN.

"YESTERDAY, by special license, at the residence of her father, in Berkeley Square, Fanny, youngest daughter of John Pierrepoint Neville, Esq., of Bishop's Court, Yorkshire, to Henry, eldest son of Henry Saville, Esq., of Latimers, Herefordshire. Immediately after the ceremony, the happy pair left town for Latimers. There were present on the occasion the Duke and Duchess of Darlington, the Marquis and Marchioness of Sudbury, Lady Florence Lindley, the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Viscount and Viscountess de Clifford, Viscountess Dowager de Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, the Honourable Herbert Grimstone, and the Honourable George Pierrepoint. The dejeuné was in Gunter's best style, and the trousseau of the lovely bride was furnished by the joint efforts of Mesdames Minettes and Victorine, of Paris."

Such was the paragraph that greeted Cheveley's eyes upon entering the breakfast-room at Cheveley the morning after Saville's marriage, from attending which,

he had excused himself on the plea of indisposition, for he was determined religiously to adhere to his promise to Julia, of not premeditatingly putting himself in her way; and though no one could rejoice more sincerely than he did in his friend's happiness, yet he could hardly have borne to see him married to the sister of the only woman he had ever loved, and contrasted the difference of Lady de Clifford's wretched fate with that of her more fortunate sister. His eyes were still riveted upon the paragraph, or, rather, upon the words, "Viscountess de Clifford," when a servant entered with a salver full of letters, two of which were from Saville and Fanny, the latter to thank him for a beautiful "pareur" of brilliants and sapphires he had sent her as a bridal present. Cheveley tore this open first, hurrying over all the thanks, and even the hopes that she and Saville might see a great deal of one for whom they had so sincere a regard. His cheek burned, and his breath was suspended, when he came to the end of the letter, for it contained the words, "Dear Julia is not quite recovered from the effects of her illness; she is going down to that gloomy, horrid place, Grimstone, by herself. I hope Harry won't feel his manly vanity outraged, but I really am not so selfish as to feel happy when I think of the undeserved sufferings of one for whom the best of human lots would not have been good enough. I told her I was going to write to you; she desired her kind regards and best wishes. My little niece's commission cannot be executed by proxy, as it consisted of kisses, which, as I told her, 'She must contrive to give you herself some day or other.' But the carriage is waiting to take us to Latimers, and Harry has just made his debut in a very conjugally dictatorial 'Come, Fanny.' So, fearing it might grow by delay into 'Come, madam!' I must say good-by; but not before I have assured you

"That I am, dear Lord Cheveley,

"Your grateful and sincere friend,

"Fanny Saville."

"Oh God! oh God," cried Cheveley, burying his face in his hands, "if I could in any way minister to her comfort, I would willingly sign a compact never to see her; but to know that she is ill, lonely, driven into a dreary solitude by the petty tyranny of one who is

not content with the most lawless liberty for himself, without oppressing her with the most inquisitorial persecution; it is too, too much; and I feel all that the world envies, as wealth, station, power, a mockery, when it cannot extend to her. Julia, my poor Julia, to think that the only being on the face of God's earth, who would tear out his heart to serve you, is the only one who could not move hand or foot to do so without injuring you, is greater torture than sin could ever deserve or time ever atone for."

Cheveley sat so long pondering over Julia's and his own adverse fortunes, that the butler thought something must have happened, and came to see if he might remove the breakfast things; at which his master gathered up his letters, and throwing up the window, walked out upon the terrace, followed by Prince, who had exercised an especial guardianship over him of late; for dogs are sensible people, and see when bipeds are not quite fit to be left to themselves.

As Cheveley walked mechanically on into the beautiful valley that lay at the foot of the gardens, he opened Saville's letter. Nothing could be kinder or more devoted than its whole tone; and with that delicacy which sympathy ever inspires, he entered into and soothed his friend's feelings without ever alluding to them; one thing he hinted slightly, yet firmly, which was, the injury he would do to others as well as himself by remaining shut up at Cheveley, and not mixing in society as usual. "Saville is right," said he, putting the letter in his pocket, as he walked on with his hands behind him; "but, like everything else that one ought to do, it is much more easily said than done." As he made this reflection he reached the last terrace; the tinkling, lulling sound of a fountain made him turn round; the design of this fountain was Hylas and the Nymphs, done in bronze; but the water in the basin was so stagnant, that it was covered with unblown water-lilies. The thought of these "fair white river-cups" carried him back to Julia and to Como; and though it was a sharp March day in England, he actually fancied he inhaled the verbenum-scented air of Pliny's villa.

"Thus in each flower and simple bell,
That in our path untrodden lie,
Are sweet remembrances which tell
How fast their winged moments fly."

"I beg your pardon, my lord," said Mr. Marshall, emerging from behind the fountain and taking off his hat, which Prince began busily investigating, "but I have spoken to one of the gardeners about cleaning this basin; and I hope your lordship won't see it in this state by to-morrow."

"Upon no account let them touch it," said Cheveley; "on the contrary, I am so fond of these lilies, that I wish them even artificially cultivated wherever there is water; so have the goodness to attend to it, Marshall, will you?"

"Very good, my lord, it shall be done," said Marshall, bowing a retreat, as Lord Cheveley descended the broad old stone steps that led into the valley. One side of this valley was bounded by a hawthorn hedge; on the other side of which was a by-road leading to Blichingly, and skirted by the arbutus-covered rocks seen from the valley; and among the crags of which were to be seen the ruins of the old abbey before mentioned as the occasional rendezvous of the gipsies and their friends and patrons, the smugglers.

Cheveley had a vague recollection of having, as a child, climbed the opposite heights, and hid for hours among the ruins, to the no small consternation of the inmates of the castle; and now, not much caring where he went provided he felt progressing, he even determined to let Prince lead the way, and to follow wherever he went. The dog having effected a passage through the hedge, looked round for his master; but seeing that he was already in the road, he wagged his tail, and bounded swiftly on into the opposite dell. For a few moments Cheveley paused to admire the beauty of the surrounding scenery ere he followed Prince up the little winding path by the Fairy's Bath, that led to the ruins. Upon gaining the summit, Prince stopped, as dogs will do, to botanize over a tuft of daisies; and not satisfied with the intelligence his nose brought him, he kept scraping and rooting up the earth with his paws; while his master walked on till he came near the old abbey, when his attention was arrested by the sound of voices talking in a suppressed tone behind the aisle, but still loud enough for him to overhear the following dialogue:

"I think it will be the death of the old man, and that is my only fear," said a female voice.

"Nonsense. I tell you, Madge, it is the only way we can encompass the hunter in his own toils; and as for the man, you know he only lives and would die for revenge, and I honour him for it; and with heart, hand, ay, and blood, too, if needs must be, I will help him."

"Yes; but," persisted the first speaker, "see how he sinks already under disgrace and the desertion of his neighbours, and but that—"

"But me no buts, girl," interrupted the other voice; "I have never yet seen you in coward's armour; so keep a stout heart still, and you'll not only serve your friends, but, mayhap, be made a lady yourself beyond the seas sooner than you think for: but remember, a craven heart shall never be my wife."

This last threat appeared omnipotent, for the reply was in a coaxing, submissive voice.

"Well, well, Miles, you know best, and I would do anything to please you or serve them; so you'll find that poor Madge will be a good girl, and true and silent as the grave. Good lack, this is a strange world; you and I, or at least I, would be scouted as an outcast, undeserving of credit or trust, and yet here is a great man, a gentleman, a nobleman, forsooth, nay, a lawgiver and protector of the people, can do that with impunity for which hanging would be too good were he as one of us."

"The world, Madge, is divided into mountains and valleys: the great people are those upon the mountains; and however wicked they themselves may be, they have the right, because they have the power, to cast stones at those in the valley, whose inferior position precludes both retaliation and redress. But what's the matter with the dog? what is he whining and sniffing at? Wasp, lay down, sir."

"Err-err-err, bow-wow-wow, err-err-wow."

"So, ho, poor fellow: down, my man, down."

"It's only the child teasing him," said the woman's voice.

"Not it; he never minds the child; I hope there's no one outside."

"They could not hear if there was."

"I'm not so sure of that."

Cheveley, not gathering from what he had heard that any mischief was intended on the part of the two conspirators, but, on the contrary, that some was evidently to be prevented, walked quietly round to the entrance

of the ruin; and, to give those within fair notice of his vicinity, began whistling and calling loudly to his dog. Before he gained the porch a man rushed out, and, slouching his hat over his eyes, hurried down the glen: at the same moment a little Scotch terrier trotted up to Prince, barking at him furiously. But while this modicum of dog's-flesh kept advancing and retreating in quick succession, and wagging both tongue and tail with amazing velocity, his highness stood immoveably still, and allowed himself to be barked at with great dignity and endurance, taking no other notice of the attack than by placing his black, cold, stately nose amicably close to the aggressor's ear, and ever and anon giving one or two slow wags of his tail.

"Wasp, Wasp, Wasp, come here, sir," said Madge Brindal, now emerging from the ruins and leading Mary Lee's child. Cheveley started, evidently much struck by the picturesque dress and great beauty of the girl, whose brilliant complexion was rendered even richer at the moment by the fresh air and bright sunlight that, together, played upon her cheek.

"Such a fine gentleman as you should have a fine fortune: let me tell it you," said Madge, coming laughingly up to him. "Blessings on your handsome face, may all your years be summers; but I'm sure, before I look at your hand, that your fate is spun with velvet and silk; do let me unravel it for you."

"Good heavens!" cried Cheveley, for the first time looking at the child, and perfectly staggered with its likeness to Lord de Clifford, "whose child is that?"

"Poor child," said Madge, her eyes flashing as she spoke, "he has Sin for his father, and Sorrow for his mother; but his father is a great man, the popular member at Triverton."

"Lord—"

"De Clifford!" screamed Madge, as though she took delight in the impotent revenge of making the rocks echo with his name.

"Then it must have been since his marriage," said Cheveley, thinking aloud.

"You know him, then?" said Madge, looking eagerly in his face.

Cheveley was buried in a train of thought, and made no answer.

"I hear," continued Madge, "that the wretch has a wife that is too good for him."

"Too good for him! too good for any man!" cried Cheveley, biting his lip, and completely thrown off his guard by the violence of his own feelings. This was enough for the quick penetration of Madge; at one moment she discovered the truth, for nothing seemed more natural in her mind than that a man who never thought of his own wife, like Lord de Clifford, might find other men to do so for him; and having decided this point to her satisfaction, she determined upon availing herself of it, and acting accordingly.

"Well, well," said she, "it is a waste of time to talk of such as him; so do, kind sir, let me tell you your fortune. I'll warrant, if it ever had any, that the gall is by this time taken out of it."

"By-and-by," replied Cheveley, smiling; "but first tell me the history of this child."

"That will I," said Madge; "I wish I could tell it to the whole world; walk down the glen with me, and you shall hear it."

He followed her till they reached the Fairy's Bath, at the foot of the little winding path, when Madge, having pointed to the park trees of Blichingly, that were visible in the distance, commenced poor Mary Lee's story, and told it to him from beginning to end, acting so vividly the scene on the night that Richard Brindal had found her a senseless idiot in that very place where they were then standing, that Cheveley shuddered.

"Monster!" exclaimed he, drawing his hand across his eyes, as if to shut out some hideous phantom. "I wish I could see those letters!"

"And so you could," replied Madge, "if you would come as far as poor Lee's cottage; for I know where Mary keeps them, and I could get them and show them to you without her knowing a word about it; not that she now minds any one seeing them; no, no, he has insulted and trampled on her too much to have left any other feelings in her but hatred and revenge! but it's too far for a grand gentleman like you to walk, and all across the fields too."

"How far is it?" asked Cheveley.

"Nearly three miles."

"Not a bit too far, especially if they are so poor; I may be able to do something for them."

"God bless you for that, sir; but do let me tell you your fortune, for I should like to tell you all the good that I know is in store for you."

"Well, then," said Cheveley, smiling, as he put a sovereign into her hand, "be quick, and give me as much good fortune as this will purchase."

Madge took his hand, and, examining it minutely, shook her head. "This is no common hand," said she: "you have plenty to be happy with, but still you are not so; for there are wings to your heart, and it's not with you; no, nor never will be till all this has passed away. There is blood, and death, and fear, and but little hope; but that little is shrouded in a widow's hood."

Madge perceived a slight tremulousness in the hand she held, and she added, "But this year binds your fate; hush!" continued she, pointing upward, and inclining her ear towards her hand, as though listening to some mysterious sounds, for Cheveley could hear none, "hush! ay, the last sound has died away; all now is over; even when there are not *tears* there must be *time* for the dead; and however slowly it may lag," said Madge, suiting the action to the word by drawing her hand through the air, and then suddenly stopping, "it must stop at last, and then your sun will rise, and a brighter one never yet rose than it will be."

The oracular voice and Pythian air that Madge knew so well how to assume, had, in spite of himself, an effect upon Cheveley for a few minutes beyond the power of reason and common sense to ridicule him out of. The skilfully vague way she had alluded to his fate, leaving fancy to interpret, and chance to confirm her predictions, either way, glided from his imagination into his heart; he knew it was a folly, but it was one that for worlds he would not have been disabused of; for love always dislikes the head wisdom that would reduce the heart to sanity, placing the strait waistcoat of reason upon every feeling. There is not, perhaps, a more affecting proof of this extant, than an anecdote Kotzebue mentions, in his "Travels to Paris," of a girl who was in the habit of being accompanied on the harpsichord by her lover on the harp. The lover died, and his harp remained in her room. After the first paroxysm of despair, she sank into the deepest melancholy, and much time elapsed before she could bear the sound of music; but one day she mechanically struck a few

chords on the harpsichord, when, lo! her lover's harp in perfect unison, resounded to the echo. The girl was at first seized with an awful shuddering, but soon felt a kind of soothing melancholy; she thought the spirit of her lover was hovering near her, and sweeping the strings of the instrument. The harpsichord from this time constituted her only pleasure, as it afforded to her imagination the joyful certainty that her lover was ever near her: till one day, one of those awfully wise men, who try to know, and insist upon clearing up and explaining everything, came into the room during one of these mysterious duets; the poor girl begged of him to be still, as, at that moment, the dear harp was playing to her in its softest tones. Being informed of the happy illusion that overcame her reason, he laughed, and, with a great display of learning and absence of feeling, proved to her, by experimental physics, that all this was perfectly natural. From that moment the poor girl drooped, sank into a profound melancholy, and soon after died.*

What is life but a series of illusions? for the most part miserable! then are they not the worst of murderers who would destroy the few happy ones that diversify it?

They walked on in silence nearly the whole of the way; while the two dogs, who had by this time entered into an honest friendship with each other, amused themselves by running races and beating the hedges.

"And so these Lees are very poor?" said Cheveley.

"Very poor now, indeed, sir; few people had a better business than John Lee before poor Mary's troubles; but since, he does not seem to exert himself to please people as he used; and the old lady up at the Park, God forgive her for that and all her other wickedness, since her son's villany, has tried to prevent people dealing with him; and as they are chiefly her tenants round Blichingly, they are obliged to do whatever she pleases, so that he has little now to do beyond the workhouse coffins; but Mary being better, poor thing, takes in plain work again, which helps them a little. Lee could have got a very good job to repair the outhouses at Campfield last week, but he had no money to buy timber, and so was obliged to give it up."

* This anecdote has furnished the subject of a Tale by the heroic poet Korner, called "The Harp."

This narration brought them in sight of Lee's cottage; the garden was wild and desolate as usual, but opposite the door was a white birch, which Coleridge has immortalized as the

> "Most beautiful
> Of forest trees, the Lady of the Woods."

Its leafless and shadowy branches were now waving to and fro as the wind sighed through them, and although it was a bright sunny day in the woods and fields, there was a gray gloom round the nook in which Lee's cottage was situated that harmonized with the neglected look of the once-blooming garden. Wasp having done the honours to Prince by pushing open the gate with his paws, and flinging a look of invitation to him over his shoulder to follow, Madge in her turn preceded Cheveley, and pioneered away the long entangled weeds on each side of the gravel-walk that would have intercepted his passage.

"Stop," said he, as Madge laid her hand on the latch of the door; "my sudden appearance, without any ostensible reason, might distress the poor girl; so you can say I have come to bespeak some work from her father, which I intend to do; but, before I do so, I should like to see those letters you mention; you can make some excuse to call me into the garden, and show them to me there."

Madge nodded assent as she raised the latch and put down the child, who ran to its mother.

"How he do grow, to be sure," said Mrs. Stokes, who was interrupted by the child's arrival in an eloquent lament over the depredations her poultry-yard had lately experienced; all of which she unhesitatingly attributed to Richard Brindal's revenge and her husband's inertness. Mary was sitting at work on one side of the fireplace, while her father, who had his iron-rimmed spectacles on his forehead, paused from his occupation (which was that of fixing up a bracket at the other side of the chimneypiece) to listen to Mrs. Stokes's grievances.

"As I tell 'em," resumed Mrs. Stokes, speaking with even more energy and vitality than usual, "all these here worries'll be the death of me, and who'll manage the concern when I'm gone? and who'll manage John Stokes, I should like to know? oh! it won't bear a thought!"

"Hush!" said Madge, placing her finger on her lip; and then turning to old Lee, she said aloud, "See here, Mr. Lee, I've brought you a good gentleman, who wants you to do some work for him."

The old man bowed, Mary rose and blushed. As she did so, which for the moment brought back all her former beauty, Mrs. Stokes fidgeted into the perpendicular as she rubbed with her apron the chair she had just vacated and presented it to Cheveley; during these ceremonies, Madge left the room to get the letters. "Sit down, pray," said Cheveley, seating himself in the chair Mrs. Stokes had placed for him; "don't let me disturb you; I merely came about some work that I wanted done, which I will tell you of presently, if you will allow me to rest for a few minutes."

"Certainly, sir," said the old man; "is there anything I can offer you? all we have is but poor fare; but, such as it is, I should feel proud of your taking it."

"Anythink the gentleman would like, I could soon step home and fetch it," said Mrs. Stokes; and, continued she, rummaging in her pocket, and at length producing a card, which she presented to Cheveley, with many low courtesies, "At any time you should want posters, sir, we've the very best; and post twopence a mile cheaper than the Good Ooman; in short, we've *h*excellent 'commodation of *h*every kind; stabling, lock-up coach-houses, beds, foreign wines, genuine spirits; and, though I say it as shouldn't say it, as good a larder as there is in England; no one never hears no complaints of the De Clifford's *H*arms!"

Having thanked Lee but declined his offer, Cheveley, as soon as Mrs. Stokes would allow him to speak, promised to patronise the De Clifford Arms whenever he should need the hospitality of an inn.

"Thankee, sir; much obleged to you, I'm sure; but you'll please to *h*observe, sir, that *h*its the right-hand side as you come *h*up from the postoffice; for I can't a-bear to see gentlefolks entrapped by the Good Ooman that has nothin*k* fit to be seen. And if they arrive at dusk, it's sometimes the case, when they don't *exsac*-ly know which side our house is *h*on."

Much to Cheveley's relief, Madge now returned.

"Now, sir," said she, "if you please, I'll show you the beehives I told you of."

"I fear they are in such a state that they are not fit for the gentleman to see," said Lee.

"Oh, they will do to explain what I mean," replied Madge, hurrying into the garden, followed by Cheveley. "I think we had better turn down the lane, sir," said she; "for we may be observed here." As soon as they had reached the lane, she gave him Lord de Clifford's letters in rotation, and watched his countenance narrowly as he read them. When he came to the one signed "William Dale," Cheveley's indignation rose to such a pitch, that he crushed the letter in his clinched hand as he exclaimed, "Cold-blooded wretch! he would be capable of anything. Poor girl!"

"Oh, I don't wonder at your being angry, sir," said Madge; "but here is more of it." And she placed the letter from Lord de Clifford to Stokes in his hand.

"And who is this Richard Brindal, that he says was to marry Mary Lee?" asked Cheveley.

"Why, my brother," said Madge, looking down; "and I fear that is the best which can be said for him."

"And she would not marry him, eh?"

"Marry him! no, sir, she is too broken-hearted to marry any one; and if Dick had been an angel instead of being the rough, ungainly creature he is, she would scarcely have gratified that wicked lord so much as to help on his plot against herself."

"Hardly, indeed," said Cheveley; "but look here," and he put five pounds into her hand as he returned the letters. "You seem a good girl, and anxious to serve your friend; so say nothing of having shown me these letters. If ever I can do any good by acknowledging that I have seen them, you may depend upon it I shall not deny it."

Madge thanked him, and promised to be silent.

As they returned to the cottage Cheveley was buried in thought. Bad as his opinion had always been of Lord de Clifford, reality had for once outstripped imagination; and if he had before pited Julia for being married to such a man, he now actually shuddered at it; for what could not such total want of feeling, and want of principle combined, be capable of! He knew that persons of strong passions seldom have much feeling, and therefore he had never suspected him of any; but the facts that had just come to his knowledge painted him in blacker colours than his most vivid fancy

could have done. It was the cold-blooded, business-like calculation of his villany that so revolted him, compared to which the sins of impulse become virtues, however deep their dye.

As they neared the cottage, the pale, blighted, but still beautiful form of Mary Lee, the silver hair and careworn look of her father, joined to the proud beauty and suppressed sorrow of Lady de Clifford in Cheveley's imagination, formed a group which made it well for him that Lord de Clifford was not near him at that moment. When he re-entered the cottage he was glad to find that Mary had gone away; for to have seen her again would only have distressed him still more.

"If you will have the goodness," said he to the old man, "to give me a pen and ink and a bit of paper, I'll write down the address where you are to call to-morrow; and as I understand your work is at a stand-still for want of timber, this may help to purchase some," added he, placing a fifty-pound note in Lee's hand.

"No, no, sir," said the old man, his eyes filling with tears, "I cannot take your money till I have earned it."

"I mean that you should earn more than this," said Cheveley, "so I must insist upon paying you in the way and at the time most convenient to myself."

With that good-breeding which good feeling inspires even in the humblest, he made no further objection, but bowing, merely said,

"As you please, sir. May God bless you;" and he placed the pen, ink, and paper before Cheveley, who wrote,

"Marshall, employ the bearer about every carpenter's work that is wanted, till farther orders.

"CHEVELEY.

"March 22, 18—."

And having placed it in the old man's hand, left the cottage, amid the blessings of Lee and Madge, and the reiterated courtesies of Mrs. Stokes. As soon as he was gone, the former put on his spectacles to read the address of the place he was to go to the next day.

"I declare, it is the young Marquis of Cheveley!" said the old man.

"The Marcus of Cheveley!" screamed Mrs. Stokes. "Lor! to think as I should have been so free with a marcus!" The bare idea was so overpowering, that

Mrs. Stokes sank back in her chair: but she was not a woman long to be awed by any man, so, soon rallying, she added, "but you all saw how *h*affable he was, and you heerd him promise to pa*ter*nise the De Clifford *H*arms. Well, to be sure, a mar*cus*! Who'd have thought it? I *am* surprised."

"I can't say that I am," said Madge, "except that he's not a prince, for he looks like one."

"And acts like one too," said Lee; "and this I owe to you, Madge; but you are always doing kind things by us."

"As you must thank some one, thank chance, or, rather, Providence," said Madge, "for I have nothing to do in the matter farther than being heartily glad of it."

"You are a good girl, Madge, and have a kind, honest heart," cried the old man, placing his hand upon her shoulder, "and would that many who are called better were half so good."

"Amen!" laughed Madge.

"A mar*cus*!" soliloquized Mrs. Stokes, as she pinned on her shawl. "Well, it's a pity some people don't know when they have got a good wife: now there's that great lazy oaf, John Stokes, I spose he'd walk from one *h*end of the world to the *h*other afore he'd fall *h*in with a mar*cus*, and get him to promise his custom to the De Clifford *H*arms."

"Are you going straight home, Mrs. Stokes?" asked Madge.

"Let me see," said Mrs. Stokes, abstractedly counting on her fingers, "turbot and lobster sauce, gravy soup; removed with haunch of venison (can always get that from the Park), chickens in white sauce, Scotch collops, *mentimang* cutlets; remove with jelly, blanc mange, Charlotte of *h*apple, and custards. The plated dishes; must send 'em to Lunnun to be cleaned, though; and Lord Cramwell's claret. Yes, that's the dinner for a mar*cus*," said Mrs. Stokes, triumphantly, as she concluded this imaginary culinary "chef d'œuvre."

Madge reiterated her question.

"Eh—yes—no—why, my dear?" said Mrs. Stokes, gradually descending into the present from Lord Cheveley's dinner up stairs, in No. 22, at the De Clifford Arms.

"Because I wanted you to take this little parcel, to go by the London coach."

"Oh! well, that I'll do," said Mrs. Stokes, walking out of the cottage, with her head a great deal higher than when she had entered it. "So, good-by."

"I wish, Madge," said Lee, as soon as Mrs. Stokes was gone, "that you would leave a letter up at Cheveley Place for me this evening, for I shall feel quite oppressed till I have tried to thank his lordship for all his goodness."

"I think you had better not," said Madge, slightly colouring; "at least, I mean that you had better not send it by me; he might not like the idea of gipsies coming about his house, or he might think that I was encroaching upon his kindness of this morning; not that he would be likely to know it, but I feel that I ought to keep away; and—and—my going might prejudice the servants against you, and you know what great people they are in a great house."

"Madge," said the old man, pressing her hand, while a tear rolled down his withered cheek, "you ought to be a queen; you have more sense, judgment, and good feeling than half the rest of the world put together."

Cheveley, after leaving Lee's cottage, wandered home so abstractedly,

"Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter thoughts,"

that he was in his own grounds without being aware of it till a servant met him, and told him that Mr. Spoonbill was in the library.

CHAPTER XII.

"The night came on alone,
The little stars sat one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening air pass'd by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirr'd,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard."

R. M. MILNES.

"And why not death, rather than living torment?
To die is to be banish'd from myself."

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

"There are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all."—1 *Cor.* xii., 6.

Two hours after the sound of the chariot-wheels that conveyed Fanny to Latimer's had died away, the carriage that was to take Lady de Clifford down to Grimstone came to the door. Lord de Clifford had engagements which took him out immediately after the wedding, and therefore prevented his being in the way to see his wife off; but Mr. Frederic Feedwell had kindly remained for that purpose. After having passed a week in telling Lord de Clifford that it was weak good-nature in him to allow Lady de Clifford to remain in town for her sister's marriage, he now spent the short time that intervened between Julia's departure in shrugging his shoulders, and whispering her that really it was

"De-de-dreadfully tyrannical in De Clifford sending her down alone to that gloomy, desolate place, Grimstone, just at the beginning of the season, too; and that, though no one admired obedience in a wife more than he did, yet there were things that no wife ought to submit to, and it was qu-qu-quite evident to him that De Clifford was getting her out of the way for his own purposes; and though he did not pretend to be ve-ve-very moral, yet really such things were too bad in a married man; a married man, you know, Lady de Clifford!" and up went his two fingers.

Having turned in silent contempt from the serpent-like consolation of Mr. Frederic Feedwell, poor Julia had

next to endure what was much more insupportable, the false and treacherous condolences of her mother-in-law.

"My dear madam, I feel quite sorry you are not going to remain the season in town; any one else might find it vaustly dull at Grimstone just now; but with your mind and the little *gurl's* company, I'm sure you never can be dull."

"My brother thought, my dear Julia," yawned out Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he stood arranging the few fractional hairs on each temple under his hat, "my brother thought that, not being well, you would prefer being in the country. I'm sure that anything he and I can ever do to promote your comfort in any way, we shall be most happy to do."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to say so."

"Oh, I'm sure, my dear mamma, Julia will do me the justice to believe that I have always studied her interests as much as if she had been my own sister."

But Julia leaving the room in utter disgust at the contemptible little animal's inane hollowness, the amiable mother and son took their departure, and left her to finish the preparations for her journey unmolestedly, save by the sighs and indignation of Beryl, who kept flinging the things about, as she vowed to Miss Grant (little Julia's new governess) that of all the wicked things Lord de Clifford and his mother had yet been guilty of, "this sending her dear lady away to that dreary, horrid place, at this time of the year, was the most wickedest." That she was sincere in this opinion no one can doubt, when it is remembered that ladies cannot be banished without their maids, and that, two hours before, Beryl had seen Luton and Gifford so happily forming part of the "cortège" of the bridal party; all of which formed a most tantalizing background, in her imagination, to the gloomy gable ends of the Elizabethan pile at Grimstone, with its cold passages, bad neighbourhood, and worse roads, and its village church which scarcely mustered a congregation of twenty, while the stone effigies of the Grimstones looked only less cold and rigid than their living descendants.

"But never mind; mark my words, ma'am," said Beryl to Miss Grant, as she locked the last imperial with a jerk, and pushing it with her foot, called to two of the footmen to take it down stairs, and let her ladyship know

that everything was ready; "mark my words, ma'am, it will come home to them yet; for it is an impossibility such wickedness should go unpunished, especially with the old woman, who is at the bottom of it all."

"I think, Beryl," said Miss Grant, "you ought to try and appear cheerful and happy, for poor Lady de Clifford's sake; for it can but add to her low spirits to see every one miserable and discontented about her."

"Oh, bless her," replied Beryl, "she shall not see me discontented; but I cannot help saying, ma'am, what I think of those wretches, for they are nothing else."

"Beryl, Beryl," cried little Julia, running in with Tiney in her arms, "mamma is waiting; and she says you are not to forget Tiney's basket; and do give me a silk handkerchief to tie round her poor little throat, for she is trembling with the cold."

"If she is so cold, miss, a velvet shawl will be better."

"So it will," said the child, delightedly, as she wrapped up the little animal, leaving nothing but its beautiful head and long ears visible; "and how pretty she looks with all this black velvet around her; doesn't she, Miss Grant!"

"Yes, dear, very pretty," replied Miss Grant, patting the dog's head; "but your mamma is waiting, and we must go."

"I do love you," said Julia, following her down stairs; "for you never scold me, and tell me I am a fool about the dog, as Mademoiselle d'Antoville used; and," continued the child, stopping on the landing-place, and standing on tiptoe as she held up her little mouth to her governess, "I like to kiss you too, for you are so pretty, and so smooth, and so clean."

About three o'clock on the day after she left London, Lady de Clifford arrived at Grimstone. Dreary and desolate as she had always found it, it was now additionally so, for the house was undergoing repair, and was still full of workmen. The cold, cheerless hall was a perfect chaos, with deal boards, shavings, carpenters' tools, and packing-cases, that had been forwarded from Italy. The uncarpeted stairs presented nothing but dirt and discomfort, and the grating of saws and the din of hammers distracted one sense, while the dense smoke of green wood, that issued from the cold and long-unoccupied grates, overpowered another.

As soon as Julia had reached her bedroom, she was astonished to see the posts, tester, and footboard of an old, carved, black oak bedstead, in which she was to sleep, still lying in disjointed fragments about the floor! The fact was, Lord de Clifford had too much on his mind, both amatory and political, to be able to think of such trifles as the comfort and well-being of his wife and child, and, therefore, had only written to Mrs. Jones, the housekeeper, two days before, announcing that Lady de Clifford was going to Grimstone; it was enough for him to know that they were banished, and thereby that he had the world to himself, without being guilty of the puerility of caring how dreary the banishment might be. Immediately on the receipt of his letter, poor Mrs. Jones had fumed, fretted, ordered, scolded, scrubbed, swept, and, in short, done all that could be done in the time; and though great had been the labours of each and all, little was the apparent result from them.

"Dear mamma," said Julia, "come out of this nasty, cold room; the smoke will make you cry, as it does me."

Poor Lady de Clifford sank into a chair and cried in good earnest. Beryl, who now arrived, laden with cloaks and packages, cast one look round the dreary dismantled room, and muttering, "Well, this is a little too bad," rang the bell violently. Mrs. Jones appeared, courtesying and panting, with her hand upon her side, quite out of breath between agitation and getting up stairs. As soon as she could speak, she also began to cry. "I assure you, my lady," sobbed she at last, "I never was so hurt in my life as to think you should have to come to such a place; but I only got my lord's letter two days ago; and work as we would, we could get no farther than you see, having no idea that the house would be wanting these four months, if then."

"I think, ma'am," said Beryl, ironically, "as you pretend to feel so much for her ladyship, you might, at least, have had her bed put up: where is she to sleep, pray?"

"Oh, do not say pretend, Mrs. Beryl, for I *do* feel for her ladyship with all my heart; but it is not my fault about the bed either. Last week a very handsome bedstead, with crimson damask hangings, all beautifully trimmed with white satin, like a wedding-bed, came down; and thinking, of course, it was for my lady, it

was put up here; but last night, down came Mr. Tabouret, the upholsterer, in a great fright, and said it was all a mistake, as it was for my lord's own room in Grosvenor-street; so it was taken down, and sent away at eight this morning, and they have not yet had time to put up the other."

"Trimmed with white satin! trimmed with white satin!" muttered Beryl, bridling up, and throwing everything about within her reach; "I'll tell you what *hit* is, Mrs. Jones," continued she, walking up to her, and speaking in a low voice, with her teeth set and her hands clinched, "I'd a tore it all to pieces with my *h*own ands when it ad the good luck to come in my way, before I'd a let him and his fy-fies a had such a bed, while his poor dear wife is to be shut up in this dreary prison, without any bed at all, it seems. Oh, shame, shame! I *wonder*, Mrs. Jones, where your feeling as a woman, as as been a wife, was, to let the filthy bed go back."

"Indeed, ma'am," sobbed Mrs. Jones, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, "had I suspected anything of the sort, I am sure I should have laid violent hands on it."

"Ah! some people never has the sense to suspect nothing, and that's what the men wants to bring us *h*all to; but they will find some of us too many for them yet."

"Beryl," called Lady de Clifford, coughing violently, "do get me some 'pâte de Guimauve.'"

"If I might take such a liberty as to ask your ladyship to sit in the housekeeper's room," said Mrs. Jones, advancing, "you would find it what no other part of the house is at present—clean, warm, comfortable, and quite free from smoke."

"Thank you, Jones; but that would be turning you out."

"Oh, never mind me, my lady; I can stay in the still-room, or the hall, or anywhere; but it would be something off my mind if I could see you and Miss Julia, bless her! a little more comfortable."

"Do, mamma," said Julia, "for Jones used to have such nice cakes and sweetmeats in that room, and I dare say she has still."

Lady de Clifford smiled at the cogency of the child's reasoning; and yielding to the combined entreaties of

all present, she took Miss Grant's arm, and followed Mrs. Jones, who led the way to her own territories. Mrs. Jones did the honours of her apartment by wheeling the sofa near the fire, and removing the bright brass kettle from the hob; also, the hyacinths from the chimneypiece, which she feared would make Lady de Clifford's head ache; while little Julia climbed on all the chairs to examine the pictorial beauties of the walls, which consisted of an engraving of the "Ecce Homo;" Mr. Garrick in "Richard the Third;" Mrs. Woffington as "Lady Townly," in the "Journey to London;" "George the Third walking on the Terrace at Windsor;" a large sheep in a green field, all to himself, worked in lamb's wool; a print of Grimstone; another of Blichingly; a bunch of carnations, tied with a true lover's knot, done in tent-stich, surmounted by a coloured woodcut of the Marquis of Granby, with a fierce tear going obliquely across his face, the whole enclosed in black wooden frames; while on the mantelpiece, besides the displaced hyacinths, were a Jacob's ladder, in spun glass; a cabriolet, containing a lady and gentleman, of the same brittle material; and a fine-coloured, pipe-clay, eight-inch statue of Napoleon. Between the two windows was a table covered with green baize, on which stood a satin-wood tea-chest; behind which, a japan tea-tray formed a fine Rembrandt-toned background. On the hearth-rug sat a cat, more respectable than stately, who, however, withdrew to the "bel retiro" of a chest of drawers upon the entré of Tiney and Zoë.

Miss Grant sent for a square piano out of the schoolroom, in the hope of making the time pass less heavily; for she played beautifully, and sang with great feeling and expression. Little Julia took her work, and sat at her mother's feet as she lay on the sofa; and Miss Grant asked permission to read out the three last numbers of "Nicholas Nickleby;" which soon made Lady de Clifford forget (as it had done many others) all her sorrows for a time. After dinner, Miss Grant had recourse to Strauss, and some beautiful things from the "Norma" and the "Lucia," till at length, pausing to think what she would play next, Lady de Clifford said,

"Do, Miss Grant, if I have not quite tired out even your good-nature, sing me those beautiful words of Mr. Kennedy's which you set to music."

"They are very beautiful, but very mournful; and I

think your ladyship would like a little Venetian air, that I have never yet sung to you, better."

"Oh, no, no; nothing Venetian," said Lady de Clifford, passing her hand over her eyes; "the other, pray; for, when I feel melancholy, I like mournful music."

Miss Grant had now no alternative but to comply, and accordingly sang the following beautiful words:

"Would that the hour you call'd me thine,
Deserted girl, had been our last!
Before the star had ceased to shine,
Whose influence then was o'er us cast.
Would that we had not linger'd here,
But in the stillness of that dream,
Floated to some less troubled sphere,
Like rose-leaves down a summer stream.

"Thy heart to loneliness and grief,
Then had not been an early prey;
Nor had I felt my fond belief
In life's illusion fade away.
Oh! no, I had not lived to mourn
The choice I in my madness made;
Of toys by folly won and worn,
Which left for banish'd peace a shade.

"The world—my uncomplaining love—
The world I wooed, avenged thee well;
The golden shower I prized above
Thy young affection, on me fell.
The hand of power, the voice of fame,
In later days have both been mine;
But never have I felt the same
In heart, as when you call'd me thine."

The expression of indignant feeling Miss Grant threw into the last verse, did ample justice to the beautiful words, and left the echo of her voice floating on the heart long after its sounds had ceased. The rest of the night passed wearily away, for it was past midnight before Lady de Clifford's room and bed were ready. On taking up the newspapers the next morning, Julia had the pleasure of reading the following paragraphs, all "en suite."

"Yesterday morning, Viscountess de Clifford left town for Grimstone, where it is her ladyship's intention to remain during the rest of the season."

"Yesterday evening, Viscount de Clifford entertained a select party at dinner, at his residence in Grosvenor-street. Among the company present were the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Lords Albert and Harry

Dinely, Viscount St. Leger, Lady Charlotte Loory, Lady Stepastray, the Hon. Mrs. Dreadnought, the Hon. Mrs. Reynard Alley, the Hon. Herbert Grimstone, Mr. York Fonnoir, Mr. Snobguess, and Mr. Frederic Feedwell."

"The Dowager Lady de Clifford also had a 'soireé musicale' at her house in Bruton-street yesterday evening, which was numerously and fashionably attended."

"It is currently reported in the highest circles, that a marriage is on the tapis between the young Marquis of Cheveley and the beautiful Lady Fanny Germaine, the accomplished niece of the premier."

Now, though Julia had often tried to persuade herself that Cheveley ought to marry, nay, though she had gone still farther, and tried to persuade herself that she *wished* him to do so, and though she did not believe this report of his marriage with Lady Fanny Germaine, yet it had the power of making her additionally unhappy for the rest of the day. Alas! poor human nature; disguise it as we will, love makes a chameleon of the heart; since, under its influence, every passing breath gives a different hue to its feelings; it only requires a word, a look, a tone, to make it "couleur-de-rose," and half of either, to render it more drear and dark than a starless midnight. It is this atmospheric variability, if one may use the expression, that occasions the thousand little dissensions that spring from love itself; for it is generally in the fondest moments, that hearts that love ask and expect sacrifices, and each feels chilled and disappointed that the other has not yielded to it: "You should not have asked at such a time," pouts one; "Ah! *you* should not have refused," sighs the other; and both are equally disappointed in the ovation that each thought should have been exclusively theirs.

Time rolled on, and except that passed with her child, whose sweet young nature daily promised all she could wish, it was weary in the extreme to Lady de Clifford, for there is nothing more difficult for the unhappy to get accustomed to than a *forced* and cheerless solitude: to be alone *often* is not only a relief, but a luxury; but to *be always* alone is next akin to madness. Except from Fanny, she seldom heard from any one; for her most professing friends were too happy, and too gay, and too busy to write; and when they did, their letters were either filled with their own triumphs, or with offensive and frivolous apologies for not having written

before; which, in plain English, amounted to, "I'll write to you when I've nothing better to do, and this is as much as you can or ought to expect, now that you are no longer in the way to contribute to our amusement or well-being."

She was also somewhat amused and disgusted at hearing that ladies who called their husband's brutes, tore their pocket-handkerchiefs, and went into hysterics at the disappointment of a delay about a ball or an opera-box, were much shocked at her for not *cheerfully* submitting to whatever species of banishment Lord de Clifford ordained for her; while other exemplary ladies, though engaged to be married to another before their husbands were cold in their graves, were equally shocked at her *want of feeling* in writing to them in unmeasured terms of grief at the loss of a faithful dog, who had been her unchanging friend and companion for years; and wrote her word she *must be mad* to think of intruding her canine loss upon the orthodox affliction of black crape and muslin caps. This was too disgusting to be angry with, and she merely thought of the story of the Venetian lady, who, when her confessor came to condole with her for the loss of her husband, found her in high spirits playing piquet with an adventurer; he remonstrated upon the indelicacy of such a proceeding:

"Ah padre mio," said the lady, "had you come a quarter of an hour sooner, you would have found me dissolved in tears! but I staked my grief on the game with this young man, and, as you perceive, I've lost it!"

Julia had still to learn that she should not measure other hearts by her own; for she would have done more to serve an utter stranger than her "soi-disant" best friends would do to secure her salvation: no wonder, then, that she was disappointed; but disappointment, after the first bitterness is past, is a fine tonic, and gives an elasticity to the mind that saves it from all future morbidity; when once we reflect, in the beautiful words of James Knox, that

> "The friends have all deserted us,
> We loved in days of yore,
> Since stranded by the storms of fate
> Upon misfortune's shore."

We begin to weigh those friends in the balance, and,

if among the gay, the hollow, and the worldly, they are sure to be "found wanting;" to lose such, then, is, in fact, "to gain a loss:" at first we grieve over the worthless phantom; but, oh! the happiness, as we look wistfully back again through the vista of years, to discover *some* dear "old familiar faces," with hearts *as familiar*, whose mild, steady light of love made no display in the sunshine of prosperity; but returns to cheer, guide, and help us through the night of adversity; and prove, that in *some instances* the bread we have cast upon the waters does indeed return to us after many days. Would that I could dip this pen into my heart, and I should be eloquent in praise of one whose kind, gentle heart is now cold and still; but the good *he did is not* "interred with his bones;" for he has delegated it to one as kind, as diligent, as generous, as delicate as himself; but how poor are words for friendship such as theirs or gratitude like mine. May the path they have smoothed for me on earth be remembered to them in heaven!

It was now May, beautiful, balmy May, that always seems to me like the first love of the year, when the flowers begin to blush beneath the warmth of the sun's gaze, and the bees murmur honeyed nothings in their leaves. Lady de Clifford had so portioned out her time as to fill up every interstice of it: her child, her flowers, her visits to the poor, and long country walks, all filled up the day; and even in the stillness of night, when thoughts, those noiseless and undeniable visiters, *will* intrude, she would get up, write letters, or do anything to banish the remembrance of Cheveley. Then came Sunday; a Sunday in the country, when there is a holy calm in all around, as though Nature herself was hushed in prayer, and no sound steals on the ear but the bells of the village church, proclaiming the Sabbath through the quiet fields, and harmonizing the spirit to thankfulness and hope. How often she thought, as she walked to the lowly fane, and still more when she heard the words of comfort and encouragement enforced and expounded by Mr. Osborne, the rector, that she *had*, or that she *would* conquer herself; that she would never rest till she had uprooted every sinful feeling! but still, thoughts, which are the shadows of feeling, would sometimes intrude in spite of herself.

She had been nearly three months in the country,

and notwithstanding all her incessant struggles with, and occasional victories over, herself, she had never had courage to take the sacrament; she wished, hoped, feared, trembled, and deemed herself unworthy of it. Whether it was that Mr. Osborne had remarked her constant attendance and attention at church, and her non-attendance at the communion-table, or that he merely gave the admonition, in the course of his duty, towards all his parishioners, she knew not; but certain it was, that on the tenth Sunday after she had been at Grimstone, had he been sitting in Julia's heart he could not have replied to her thoughts or refuted her doubts better. His text was from 2 Cor. v., 17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

In the course of his sermon he said (and Lady de Clifford *thought* he fixed his eyes upon her), "Let no one be discouraged from coming to Christ because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, and all those spiritual qualifications which he desires to have: we must first be in Christ before we are new creatures; we would fain have something before we come; we are prone to conclude that God's pardons are not free, but that we must bring something with us wherewith to purchase them; but no, the proclamation runs thus: 'Buy, without money,' 'Come and take the water of life freely.' Therefore, do not say, 'I have a sinful disposition, and a hard heart, and cannot mourn for sin as I should; I will therefore stay till I am better.' This is as though I should say, 'I will go to the physician, but I will have my malady healed first.' The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away; that this very deadness of spirit may be removed; that thou mayst be enlivened, quickened, healed; that thou mayst hate sin, and become fruitful in righteousness, before thy soul be united to Christ by a living faith. For it is faith that purifies the heart, and works (produces good works) by love. We must not pretend to serve God by only going to church, and doing other acts of outward devotion; while we are dead and cold, our religion is vain. They who, like Mary, seek grace from the words of Christ, receive the assurance of divine approbation; and this stimulates them to fresh acts of piety and beneficence. It is almost impossible for such to go on in haughtiness, envy, hatred, and disobe-

dience. Grace and faith will resist it, and make them lowly, gentle, willing, obedient, active, without relying on any works of their own. Whosoever withdraws his heart and senses from the bustle and noise of this world, looking for salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ, will certainly find there that 'better part, which shall not be taken from him.'"

That day Julia remained for the sacrament. She returned home feeling happier than she had done for some time; she had cast her burden upon Him who could alone bear it; she had sought God and found him, and peace was once more in her heart. It has been truly and beautifully remarked by some one, that "moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtue." Lady de Clifford felt this, and made no violent resolves; but a calm determination never to think of Italy, or anything connected with it, seemed to diffuse itself over her mind. On her return home little Julia ran into her dressing-room.

"Dear mamma," said she, kissing her, "how well you look; like what you used to look."

"E vero, vero," chirped the starling that Cheveley had given her; the sound of the bird's voice for a moment sent the blood from her heart to her cheek; but, making a great effort, she turned to Beryl, who was taking off her things, and said,

"Take the bird down to Jones's room, Beryl, will you, for it disturbs me."

"Poor Pipola," cried little Julia, "do let me have him in the schoolroom, mamma?"

"No, love," replied Lady de Clifford, "he would disturb you at your lessons;" and she blushed as she made the objection, for she felt it was a subterfuge; but, being so often there herself, the poor little starling would as much remind her of all she wished to forget, as if he had remained where he then was. Beryl took the bird: his mistress gave one last look at him as he left the room; and if, for a moment, tears gathered in her eyes, they only served to commemorate the first signal victory she had gained over herself.

From that day Lady de Clifford pursued "the even tenour of her way," and gradually began to regain the peace she had been so long a stranger to; her chief solace was in the instructive society of Mr. Osborne and his kind-hearted wife. She received few letters,

except from Fanny and her husband, and they breathed the very spirit of affection and friendship; in his last, Saville had mentioned that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had been appointed to a northern embassy, and had taken his departure the preceding week. The only drawback to the quiet enjoyment of her present mode of life was the occasional long country visits she had to pay over bad crossroads, with miserable posthorses. All newspapers she had eschewed, for they were sure to contain something to annoy her, one way or the other, and she had made a resolution that she would not be annoyed. She was sitting one evening on the lawn, looking at little Julia and Zoë running races, when she saw Mr. Osborne walking up the broad gravel walk of the "pleasaunce." She rose to meet him.

"Good evening, Mr. Osborne; what a lovely day this has been. I hope you are come to stay, and that you will allow me to send down to the rectory for Mrs. Osborne."

"Thank your ladyship, not this evening," replied Mr. Osborne, "for I have to go and see a poor man who lies dangerously ill five miles off; but as you say you never look at a newspaper, I could not resist bringing you this, and begging you to read the ablest and most eloquent speech, without exception, that I have read in a long time; it has made a tremendous sensation in London, and, politically speaking, has nearly annihilated Lord Melford."

"I have no great love for politics," said Julia, smiling; "but, to please you, I really think I could read a whole debate. What is it about?"

"Lord Denham and the colonies," replied Mr. Osborne, looking down the columns of the paper. "Ah, here it is. 'The Marquis of Cheveley rose in reply.'"

Luckily, a garden seat was near, into which Julia sank; for at Cheveley's name, coupled with such unqualified approbation, the blood seemed to eddy in a whirlpool round her heart, and a sudden faintness came over her.

"Dear Lady de Clifford, you are ill," said Mr. Osborne, anxiously.

"No, no, only a slight spasm; it will be over in a minute."

"I fear the grass may be damp, as the dew is falling; you had better not stay out."

"Oh, I am better now," said Lady de Clifford, rising.

"Which gate did you come in at? a walk will do me good; I'll go as far as the lodge with you."

"I came by the lake, and left my horse at the other side of the ferry."

"Very well, then, we'll go across the park; that will be the shortest way," replied Lady de Clifford, taking Mr. Osborne's proffered arm.

During the walk, Mr. Osborne could talk of nothing but Cheveley's speech in reply to Lord Melford; and his praises were too sweet to Julia's ear for her to interrupt him. Nor was it till some time after she found herself alone that she was sufficiently composed to read it herself, while her heart responded in audible echoes to the "cheers" with which it was thickly interlined. Oh! what triumph has earth for us like the fame of those we love? Julia felt an indescribable pleasure in repeating over and over again every word Cheveley had uttered, and reiterating the plaudits he had received; in imagination, she heard every varied inflection of his deep, eloquent, and beautifully-modulated voice; what wonder, then, if she lingered

"By the lake with trembling stars inlaid, till earth was still,
And midnight's melancholy pomp was on the distant hill."*

* I know not who may be the author of these two beautiful lines, but I found them in Dr. Weatherhead's very clever and agreeable Pedestrian Tour through France and Italy. Simpkin and Marshall, 1834.

CHAPTER XIII.

"To be a beggar, it will cost the richest candidate every groat he has; so, before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind, which, perhaps, for a less purchase, would be thought but an indifferent bargain."—SWIFT.

"My brain, methinks, is like an hourglass,
Wherein my imaginations run like sands,
Filling up time; but then are turn'd and turn'd,
So that I know not what to stay upon,
And less to put in art."

BEN JONSON.

"His low and charmed voice made the still air so sweet,
That bees might leave Hybla to seek honey there."
Unpublished Play.

CHEVELEY had taken Saville's advice, and had forsaken the prison of Solitude to work on the treadmill of Society. And oh! the weary toil it was to him. "But another year," he thought, "and there will be no necessity for this sacrifice; and for her dear sake what would I not do?" The very homage he received in the world disgusted him; for he knew that it was not for himself, but his position; and that, had he been the most stupid or the most wicked of God's creatures, he would have been equally popular and equally caressed. The Savilles were still at Latimers, so that he felt every day more and more the desolation of the crowds in which he mingled; for companionship he had none.

Lord Melford had again made fruitless overtures to him, the result of which was a total cessation of all private intercourse between them. And, though gifted with no ordinary powers of eloquence, Cheveley had no ambition to be an orator; but he felt that he had no right to form part of the legislature of his country without defending her interests by exposing political profligacy whenever its nature or extent forced him so to do; and, roused both by justice and indignation at the flimsy equivocations and true Whig chicaneries by which Lord Melford had attempted to deny and defend some of his most undeniable and indefensible measures, he had made the able and magnificent speech at

the beginning of the session which Mr. Osborne alluded to in the last chapter. If the congratulations of friends, the extorted praise even of opponents, and the universal celebrity it ensured him, could have made him happy, Cheveley ought to have been so; but when the mind is swayed by one master passion, what mere bubbles, formed and dissolved by a breath, are the greatest triumphs that do not relate to it! If he did feel anything like gratification at the sensation his speech had made, it was only when he thought that Julia would read it, and approve of the principles which dictated it, and the manner in which he had advocated them; he also felt a secret and natural satisfaction at the blow he had struck at the party of which the man he despised most on earth, Lord de Clifford, formed one of the tools and supporters. With him personally he had no intercourse whatever; but it provoked him to see a man, by dint of party spirit and puffery, maintain his footing in the world, whom, if his real character were known, the least fastidious would have shunned. Plato does not deserve all the credit he has got for saying to Speusippus, when his servant had been guilty of a great fault, "Do you beat that fellow; for I am angry with him, and shall go farther than becomes me;" for when others avenge us we are doubly avenged; it is the having *none* to do it for us that makes us use our own hot anger, and "go farther than becomes us."

It was this conviction that kept Cheveley out of Lord de Clifford's way; for he felt he could not trust himself with him. That he should hate his wife was no longer a mystery to him; for, as Seneca truly observes, "'Tis a damned humour in great men, that whom they wrong they'll hate;" especially should wives (as they are foolishly apt to do, when they writhe under them) venture to complain of their vices; for then they reward their interference like that of Prexaspes, and convince them, after a King Cambyses's fashion, that a continuance of their excesses only enables them to pierce the heart, and destroy life with a more unerring aim.

Oh, what an odious monster is an unprincipled press-gang! writing, telling, and propagating lies from morning till night. Smiling in the face, and stabbing in the back! Of all reptiles, scribbling underlings are the vilest. Who, from parasitical maggots, gloating on the meats of the rich man's table, turn into literary panders

to the rich man's vices, whether printed or acted; who spit their anonymous venom with impunity at the weak or the injured; and while, serpent-like, they entangle their victim in their slimy coils, feel safe themselves from attack, from the conviction that none care to encounter the pestilence of their breath. Cheveley felt this, not indeed in his own person, for he was rich and great, and, consequently, beyond either their malice or their meanness, their falsehood or their fawning; but, like all generous natures, he could resent and feel indignant at injuries that were not his own; and was often roused at seeing others suffer under

> "The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> * * * * * * *
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes."

He had lately been much disgusted at a series of snake-in-the-grass critiques upon Charles Kean that had appeared in the Investigator! and an anonymous back-stabber, that disgraced a new periodical, another vehicle of the Fuzboz and Fonnoir clique, of which Fuzboz was the writer. But Cheveley's surprise would have ceased had he known what others knew, viz., that Fuzboz had formerly been under many obligations to Charles Kean; and it was an approved and successfully practised custom among the great men with whom Fuzboz was now accustomed to live, and for whom he had the honour to do dirty work, to blot out all obligations with injuries, unless those of money and dinners figuring in the *present tense*.

Cheveley had come to town for a ball at D—— House; but, not knowing how to get rid of the intervening time, he had asked Mr. Spoonbill to dinner, who had proposed going to the play.

"With all my heart," said Cheveley; and as he had no fancy for hearing all Shakspeare clipped into two words, he decided upon going to Drury Lane, and seeing, what he had long wished to see, Kean's Hamlet.

The house was crowded; and his box being the third from the stage in the first tier, he had a good opportunity of watching the thousand variations of the young actor's beautiful and expressive countenance. Except perhaps his father's, never were such eyes seen in a human head; every look was a creation stereotyped in

light, caught from the Promethean spark within; there was, indeed,

"The mind, the music, breathing from the face,"

and echoed by a voice that was the very poetry of sound, while the grace of each movement played round him like the radius of an immortal halo. Never, to his feeling, had Cheveley heard Shakspeare declaimed before. As the play advanced, it became a query in his mind how nature had worked out her designs; whether she had made the poet for the actor, or the actor for the poet; so coequal was the genius before him that imbodied, with the immortal genius that had conceived the subtle workings of the "noble mind" that was there o'erthrown. No actor, perhaps, ever before so intimately combined the "*os magna sonaturum*," which is the corporeal part, with that deep *pathos* that is the very soul and essence of tragedy. The scene at the play, where Hamlet, lying at Ophelia's feet, watches the king's countenance, was almost supernatural; the envenomed words of the player seemed to act as conductors to the lightning of Hamlet's looks, and actually to blast his uncle's heart. Another masterpiece was the closet-scene with Gertrude. The tone of reproachful sorrow in which he uttered the words,

"Mother, *you* have much offended my father,"

seemed, "jure divino," to annul the ties of nature between them, and wring her heart with the same sadness as his own. Evening after evening did Cheveley continue to enjoy the high intellectual pleasure of Kean's acting, till he became puzzled which character to fix on as his "chef d'œuvre." So excellent were all, that each seemed in its turn best; but after seeing him again and again, he gave the preference to *Hamlet* and *Lear;* for though he had often seen a drivelling old fool totter over the stage, that the playbills called Lear, he had never before seen Shakspeare's Lear personated; every one that had hitherto attempted it, seemed to forget that there is a pith and marrow in curses; a stamina in unredressed wrongs; an Herculean thew and sinew in hatred, that no time can wither into age: as Lear himself says,

"When the mind's free
The body's delicate; the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else."

Kean's Lear is, throughout, "every inch a king," never a driveller; and, when his provocations are considered, scarcely a madman. So fierce, foul, and unnatural is the conduct of his daughters, that, horrible as their father's curse is, yet it is so well earned, that every word seems to fall but as the blows of even-handed justice. In the hands of an unskilful actor this curse becomes revolting, and, therefore, seeming unnatural, places Lear on a level with his daughters; but as Kean gives it, all our sympathies remain with Lear, and in the midst of the awful and supernatural images raised by his fearful imprecations, we still behold the

> "Old, kind father, whose frank heart gave *all*,"

and feel with him that

> "That way madness lies."

In the last act, where he is dying, and says,

> "And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life;
> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
> And thou no breath at all? Oh, thou wilt come no more,
> Never, never, never, never, never!"

his acting is, without exception, the finest thing that ever was seen; his heart literally appears to break, and it is some minutes before even the fall of the disenchanting green curtain can convince us that all we have seen and heard is not real.

"And this," said Cheveley, as Hamlet died, "is the man that such a reptile as Fuzboz dares to criticise; nay, more, attempts to decry; but Seneca is right; we should never have heard of Sophroniscus but for the son of Socrates; nor of Aristo and Gryllus if it had not been for Zenophon and Plato; and, I suppose, the same age that can produce a Kean, must, of necessity, by some inscrutable law of nature, balance the marvel with a Fuzboz!"

"No doubt," replied Mr. Spoonbill; "for so it has been in all ages; and, what is worse, many of the master-spirits of this earth have only obtained 'post obits' on posterity, and starved themselves, while they made all succeeding generations rich with their posthumous fame. Look to the chronicles of our own country, for instance; old Baker, in Elizabeth's reign, gives us an inventory of *illustrious* personages long since forgotten and now unknown, and winds up as follows: 'It might

be thought ridiculous to speak of stage-players; but seeing excellence in the meanest things deserves remembering, and Roscius, the comedian, is recorded in history with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our nation. Richard Burbidge and Edward Alleyn, two such actors *as no age must ever look to see the like;* and, to make their comedies complete, Richard Tarlton, who, for the part called the clown's part, never had his match, never will have. For writers of plays and such as had been players themselves, *William Shakspeare and Benjamin Jonson* have especially left their names recommended to posterity!' Now when could there, by any possibility, be a period when Shakspeare only served to cap a clown! we cannot so much wonder that there might be another, wherein a Fuzboz would dare to criticise a Kean."

"Very true," said Cheveley, "for the Erostratus breed is by no means extinct; and those who can do nothing great themselves, are ever anxious to secure fame's bastard, *notoriety*, by destroying the great achievements of others. How I should like to know Charles Kean; I admire all I have heard of his private character so much; and, after all, that is the *real* portion of a man which we should either value or despise; for genius without the rudder of principle, or talents without the ballast of moral qualities, serve but to lure others to the same destruction that awaits their possessor."

"You would be fortunate if all your wishes could be so readily accomplished," said Mr. Spoonbill, "for I made his acquaintance last year, and a more agreeable, gentlemanlike fellow, I don't know anywhere; I'll introduce you to him now, if you like, if you will come with me to his room."

"Thank you; I should like it of all things," said Cheveley, rising to follow Mr. Spoonbill out of the box.

Upon entering Kean's dressing-room, they found him still in Hamlet's dress; the presentation over, they entered into conversation; and Cheveley found him to the full as agreeable as Mr. Spoonbill had represented; he expressed his unqualified admiration of his Hamlet; not, indeed, to the full extent of what he felt; for, on the same principle that prevents a man seriously and deeply in love paying compliments, it is utterly impossible to say *all* we think *to* a person for whom we have a genuine and enthusiastic admiration.

In the course of conversation, Mr. Spoonbill alluded to the Fonnoir clique, and was not sparing of contemptuous epithets on Fuzboz.

"I must say," said Kean, smiling, "his poor malice with regard to myself reminds me of a new reading. A man playing in a barn once gave to the end of Hamlet's soliloquy, after the players leave him, where, instead of saying, as it is written,

> ('As he is very potent with such spirits),
> Abuses me to damn me,'

he thundered out,

> ('As he is very potent with such spirits),
> He abuses *me too, dam'me.*' "

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Spoonbill; "don't say another word; for if you begin your good stories, I shall stay here all night, and old Lady Dullgabble bespoke me a week ago to escort her to D—— House; and as I saw her here this evening, I must now go, and either hear you abused or made odious by comparisons with John Kemble. So, my lord," added he, turning to Cheveley, "I'll leave you and my inclinations with my young friend here together."

Cheveley at the moment was busy looking at the picture of Kean's father, which his son always wore when he played Hamlet, and it was not till Mr. Spoonbill had closed the door after him that he felt as if he was intruding upon his new acquaintance; therefore, after having obtained a promise that he would dine with him the next day, he took his leave, possessing the rare satisfaction of retaining his veneration for the genius, wholly unimpaired by his personal intercourse with the man.

When Cheveley got into his cabriolet, he drove rapidly on, as men are wont to do when their thoughts are going a great pace. He tried to confine them to Kean, to Hamlet; but everything that was good, or beautiful, or fine, never failed to remind him of Julia; he thought how she would have enjoyed the acting he had seen that night, and then he thought of the lonely, desolate life she was leading. Here the noble animal he was driving felt an additional lash of the whip, and, thus urged to the top of its speed, dashed furiously on, till, coming in sudden and violent contact with the pole of an omnibus, the horse reared, the shafts of the

cabriolet broke, and Cheveley only escaped being dashed to pieces by jumping out on the pavement at the top of the Haymarket.

A crowd, as is usual on such occasions, having instantly gathered round the place of the accident, the horse's head was soon secured, and the groom enabled to extricate him from the broken shafts, which as soon as he had done, Cheveley ordered him to take the cab to Adams's, and the horse home, and send the carriage as soon as possible for him to the Carlton, whither he would walk. Accordingly, emerging from the crowd, he retraced his way down the Haymarket without farther impediment till he came to the Little Theatre, where there was an immense crowd, the play being just over. He was in the act of crossing to the other side of the street, when his attention was arrested by the cry of "Lady de Clifford's carriage," and the answer, "Lady de Clifford's carriage stops the way." Was it, could it be that Julia was in town?

As he asked himself this question, his heart beat so violently that he almost reeled again, and might have fallen had he not, in rushing back to the porch of the theatre, leaned against a pillar. He had scarcely drawn his hat over his eyes, before the words "Lady de Clifford coming out" fell upon his ear: suddenly his heart stopped beating, his breath was suspended, and he seemed actually to hear as well as see with his eyes, as he riveted them on the doors of the theatre; presently two figures appeared, which the light fell full upon: they were Lord de Clifford and—his mother. The former handed the latter into her carriage, and Cheveley sunk back against the pillar as disappointed and angry as if any one had deceived him, besides his own hopes. When the carriage drove off, Lord de Clifford, in returning into the theatre, jostled against Cheveley, and trod upon his foot; whereupon, instead of apologizing, he said, savagely,

"D—n you, why don't you stand out of the way?"

"Because I have as good a right to the way as you, my lord," replied Cheveley, haughtily.

"You know me, then?" drawled Lord de Clifford, who had evidently taken too much wine.

"But too well," was the laconic reply.

"What the d—l do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean what I say."

"Then," retorted Lord de Clifford, vehemently, "I'll make you eat your words, and may they choke you as you swallow them!" so saying, he raised his arm; but Cheveley calmly but resolutely seized it, and passing it back towards its owner's breast, walked under a lamp as he replied,

"And *you* know *me* too, my lord, so beware of what you are doing."

"Le-Le-Lord Cheveley!" stammered Lord de Clifford, starting back a few paces; and then added, in an ironical tone, "the Triton of the Tories, the denouncer of Democrats, the Demosthenes of dandies: most true, I know you; but allow me the honour of renewing my acquaintance with you at Wimbledon to-morrow; a little cold lead will prevent my thinking as lightly of you for the future as I do at present."

"Whatever your thoughts of me, or your designs on me, may be, you shall not betray me into a street brawl, especially as I perceive your potations have been as liberal as your politics, my lord."

"Ye-ye-you shall repent this; you shall hear farther from me, my lord marquis," muttered Lord de Clifford, closing his teeth and clinching his hand.

"As you please, my lord," said Cheveley, walking away from him and turning into Pall Mall.

And what were Cheveley's feelings as he hurried along? His first impulses were human, and, consequently, bad: for a few seconds his heart was a chaos of hope, triumph, ecstasy; here was the man he hated most on earth; who stood between him and all he loved, who caused all the misery of one whose happiness was dearer to him than his own—thrown by a sudden quirk of fortune, and that none of his own seeking either, completely into his power: he knew himself to be an unerring shot. *To-morrow*, that little feather from the wing of time, which had now nearly dropped, might blot him from creation, and leave Julia *free*. But duelling he had always been sufficiently narrow-minded to consider as much murder as stabbing or poisoning; and would Julia link herself to a *murderer* —the murderer of her *husband?* Ay, still her *husband* in *name* and in bond, if in naught else. But then *he* was no David, sending Uriah into the field to be slain; the quarrel was none of *his* seeking; nay, more, it had been thrust upon him; the laws of society demanded

that he should take it up. So far sophistry, but what did the laws of God demand? that he should "*do no murder;*" and Cheveley's *honour* being derived from those laws, however fierce the struggle might be within him, he generally ended by obeying them. When he reached the Carlton, he threw himself into a chair, exhausted by the conflict he had undergone with himself; but having once resolved upon the line of conduct he should pursue, he became calm, and, when the carriage came, returned home to make some slight alteration in his dress, and proceeded, as he had originally intended, to D—— House. In the cloak-room he was intercepted by Lady Stepastray, who mewed up to him with

"My dear Lord Cheveley, don't you think that picture," pointing to one opposite where they stood, "has a great look of Lady de Clifford?"

"Good heavens, no! as unlike as I to Hercules," said Cheveley.

"What a pity it is she and her husband cannot live together," purred Lady Stepastray.

"And why can they not, pray?" asked Cheveley, bitterly.

"Oh, poor man, he says that she has such a horrible temper, and is so dreadfully extravagant."

Cheveley bit his lip nearly through; but being determined to hear all the little demirep before him had to say, made no reply.

"And besides," continued Lady Stepastray, "he says she is so insulting to his mother, too; now that is very bad, you know, especially when the old lady has been so kind to her; for Lord de Clifford himself told me that his mother had gone on her knees to him not to marry Julia Neville, and yet, after all, the *very next day* she received her as a daughter in the most affectionate manner. Now, so ungrateful of her, you know, my dear Lord Cheveley, to behave ill to her after this," moralized Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands and looking up in his face.

Cheveley could stand this no longer, but replied indignantly,

"I always knew Lord de Clifford to be an unprincipled, cold-blooded profligate; but I never before knew he was so barefaced a one as to utter such despicable falsehoods against an innocent and exemplary wife,

whom he and his vile old mother have left nothing undone to injure, persecute, and insult."

"No, no, my dear Lord Cheveley, I really don't think so; for Mr. Fonnoir and Fuzboz, and other men who live a great deal with him, now really a *great deal*, dining with him two or three times a week, say it's *entirely* Lady de Clifford's fault, and I think *he's* such a *very* superior person; did you see a review he wrote upon my book in the Investigator? now it showed such a fine mind; yes, yes, depend upon it, my dear marquis, Lady de Clifford is to blame; *he* should have married a woman of superior mind, who could have appreciated him," concluded Lady Stepastray, looking tenderly in her own face, as reflected by the mirror near which they were standing. At this juncture Cheveley espied Mr. Spoonbill towing Lady Dullgabble up stairs, and, breaking from Lady Stepastray in disgust, joined them, leaving her Arcadian ladyship alone with Lord de Clifford's cowardly falsehoods that she had uttered at second-hand. Lady Dullgabble had an ample face, into which her nose modestly retired; a figure like a carriage-bed rolled up for travelling, and arms like young bolsters; her voice was deep-toned like a watch-dog's, and she boomed out her words slowly and jupiterically (here's a new word! and if people don't understand it, I can't help it): she had also a graceful fashion of holding up one side of her gown, no doubt to show that her ankles were legitimate branches of the same family as her arms.

"How do you like Kean's Hamlet?" asked Cheveley, when they had waded through the first two rooms as far as the door of the ballroom.

"Why, I must confess, even better than my friend John Philip Kemble's, though hitherto I have considered no one could act Hamlet after him," *tonansed* Lady Dullgabble.

"From all I have heard of him, I should have thought that he'd have been too cold and too measured for Hamlet," said Cheveley.

"Yes, true, he certainly was too cold and too measured for Hamlet," interposed Mr. Spoonbill; "but, the fact is, I never saw Hamlet before I saw Charles Kean's, though I have seen the play a hundred times; but you ought to see him in Macbeth; his Macbeth is splendid; I don't like his Othello *quite* as well as his father's."

"Macbeth can't be acted now that Mrs. Siddons is gone," said Lady Dullgabble, shaking her head; "and there is an error in Kean's Macbeth: he says, '*Is this a dagger that I see?*' too quickly. John Kemble used to say it *very slowly*."

"Then, with all due deference to your better judgment," bowed Cheveley, "I think John Kemble was wrong, and Charles Kean is right; for all excitement, and *nearly* all passions, especially those of fear and horror, are quick and sudden, and not slow and measured."

Here the Duke of D. came up, and with his wonted amiability and good-breeding, left "metal more attractive" to speak with, and listen to, Lady Dullgabble's prosings. Having shaken hands with him, Cheveley sauntered through the rooms, and could not help thinking, as he looked at *some* of the ladies present, that it might be truly said of them, as the Spanish sage said of Alexander the Great, that their "*virtue was nothing more than a successful temerity.*"

Next to the happiness of seeing the face we love best on earth in a crowd, is that of meeting the looks of one who loves what we love, and who has been with us in gone-by hours, too happy ever to return: it is like a sudden ray of sunshine lighting up the heart; and so Cheveley felt as he unexpectedly caught Mrs. Seymour's eyes, as she was wading through the crowd to speak to him.

"I am *so* glad to see you," said she, extending her hand, "you remind me so of old times: do you remember at Milan? at Venice? and, poor dear Julia, my heart aches when I think of her; but come into the little room where the cameos are, and we can talk at our ease, for there is nobody there."

Cheveley offered his arm, but his heart was too full to speak, and they walked on in silence till they reached the room Mrs. Seymour had mentioned; it was deserted, save but by a solitary couple, who were flirting over a cabinet of antiques, but who took flight on the entrance of the new comers. Cheveley had always liked Mrs. Seymour, but he now positively loved her, for the affectionate manner in which she had spoken of Lady de Clifford.

"And I am so glad to see you looking so well," said Cheveley, seating himself on the sofa beside her. "Have you heard from Mrs. Saville lately, and—and Lady de Clifford?"

"Why, as for Fanny, she is so taken up with love and Latimers, that she is a most unprincipled correspondent, getting over head and ears in one's debt; but I heard from poor Julia to-day, though I won't tell you what she said of your speech in answer to Lord Melford's, for it would make you too vain."

"And *did* she read it?" said Cheveley, a flush of pleasure suffusing his face as he asked the question.

"That did she; but I have no time to talk of speeches, even though they be *yours;* for you see me in a regular fury."

"Then you manage to conceal it wonderfully," smiled Cheveley.

"No I don't, nor I don't want to conceal it; oh! if I were but a man! I've always wished this, but I wish it now more than ever."

"Pray make me your deputy," laughed Cheveley, "even before I know what services you require of me."

"A very simple one; nevertheless, one I cannot delegate to you, for fear of what a maiden aunt of mine calls the consequences; nothing more or less than to kick or horsewhip that wretch De Clifford."

A cloud passed over Cheveley's face as he replied, "Why? what can he have done to you?"

"To me personally, nothing; but not content with the ill usage of every description he has for years heaped upon that poor injured wife of his, he has had the base falsehood and cowardly meanness, as his own conduct becomes worse, to give out that *her* temper and extravagance is the cause of their not being together now; and for the few days I have been in town, I have heard nothing else, till my blood actually boils with indignation, especially as it is only in her letter of to-day that Julia mentions having been dunned for a bill of Miss Laura Priest's, the creature he is now living with, whom it appears has dared to take Lady de Clifford's name, being shielded and countenanced on all occasions by that disgrace to human nature, Lord de Clifford's mother. And to think, because he is the tool of the basest political faction that ever existed, that he is to be upheld and supported in the world; and that there is not a human being with sufficient honesty and courage to expose him and vindicate her; oh, it is too, too bad."

"It *is too* bad," said Cheveley, leaning his forehead

upon his hand; "but don't you know, that in this, our moral country, private vices are always merged in public virtues; with one man's pet sins, no other man has a right to interfere; above all, with the treatment of wives, for a wife is a man's own exclusive property, an ambulating chattel, for whose comparative value the law has recently established a tariff; for I read in the police report a few days ago, that a fellow having severely beaten his wife and his donkey on the same day, the worthy magistrate fined him fifteen shillings for the latter outrage, accompanied with a lecture on cruelty to animals; and added another five for the former, but lesser misdemeanour. Poor Lady de Clifford! her brothers are out of the country; and, unfortunately, other men having no acknowledged right to interfere with her husband's mean persecutions and glaring vices, would only injure her by attempting it. Besides, as I before said, this is a moral country; and as long as men 'speak by the card,' no one ever thinks of testing their words by their actions. And in speeches and political articles, no one utters more sublime sentiments than Lord de Clifford; to say nothing of his having laboured indefatigably in both, to etherealize the Newgate calendar, and prove that vice ceases to be vice when indulged in by superior natures. Now considering how prone all men are to evil, you must confess that the philosophy that would destroy the tolls and barriers established by narrow-minded virtue along the high road of crime, and the sophistry that would macadamize and render it smooth and pleasant, is entitled to the gratitude and applause of the mass of mankind. Hypocrisy, too, next to wealth, is the most powerful lever of life, and this Lord de Clifford possesses in an eminent degree; no one knows better than he does, 'qu'il faut hazarder un petit poisson pour prendre un grand;' and plausibility is the bait that best catches that great Leviathan, public opinion."

"Still, I say," replied Mrs. Seymour, "that it is a thousand pities there is no one to unmask this hypocrisy."

"Why should there be, when it is chiefly exercised against a woman, and that woman a wife? and, as far as the intercourse between man and man goes, pistol-balls and black-balls regulate to a nicety their moral code. Besides, thanks to the Whigs, falsehood and

duplicity no longer lie under the stigma with which prejudice for so many years oppressed them; for nowadays, when men tell the most barefaced lies, they clearly prove to their own, and every one else's satisfaction, that it was only another and more circuitous way of telling the truth; and in political parlance, when one man calls another a liar, a coward, or a blackguard, he explains that he only means to say that the honourable gentleman is the soul of truth, the phœnix of valour, and the quintessence of respectability. So much for our English synonymes."

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Seymour, "like all men, you treat the subject lightly, and think we women have nothing to do but silently endure."

"If you think so," said Cheveley, "you widely mistake me; for I defy any woman to think so badly, or, at least, worse of my own sex than I do: for I look upon civilized man, giving way to his civilized vices, and exercising to the utmost the brutal power awarded him by those iniquitous laws which he himself has made, as a perfect monster; but, until women think, feel, and act a little more like rational beings than they do at present, I fear their most miserable and degraded position will never be bettered."

"You are now talking so sensibly," said Mrs. Seymour, smiling, "that I could listen to you for ever. But it is very late; everybody seems to be going, and I suppose we must go too."

So saying, she rose and took Cheveley's arm, who handed her to her carriage, promising he would call upon her the next day.

Upon returning home, he inquired if any one had called, but was answered in the negative. He retired to bed, but not to sleep; for he was feverish and overexcited, and, moreover, angry with himself for the self-delusion he had tried to practise in referring his resolution not to fight with Lord de Clifford solely to moral objections, when, after all, the fear of placing another and insurmountable barrier between him and Julia was the strongest, and therefore, perhaps, the real motive from which he acted. Still he had always had fixed and decided opinions on this subject, and thought with Seneca, "Our fate is at hand, and the very hour that we have set for another man's death may, peradventure, be prevented by our own!"

CHAPTER XIV.

"To fight, to bleed, perchance to die!
'But fight you *must*.' 'Then I'll fight *shy*.'"

"Ego ero post principia."

TERENT.

"Indignus qui illi matellam porrigat,
Dispeream si tu Pyladi præstare matellam
Dignus es, aut porcos pascere Pirithoi."

MARTIAL.

"'Objection!' exclaimed Mrs. Crummles; 'can it be possible?'
"'Oh, I hope not,' cried Miss Snivellicci; 'you surely are not so cruel. Oh, dear me! well, I—to think of that, now, after all one's looking forward to it.'"—*Nicholas Nickleby*, No. viii., p. 230.

No sooner had Cheveley left Lord de Clifford on the preceding night, than the latter determined to repair to Mr. Frederic Feedwell's chambers, in Lincoln's Inn, and request his services in conveying a challenge to Lord Cheveley; but, as he walked along the Strand, the fumes of the wine evaporated, and he began to think, as he had often thought before when on the eve of fighting a duel (which, however, he had never yet fought), that it was a very foolish business, and that, if he could in any way get out of it, it would be as well. To be sure, were he quite certain which way the affair would terminate, it might be of service to him with his own party; but then events and wishes are, nine times out of ten, *vice versa*, and plots, like curses, are generally reversionary. Thus pondering, he found himself in the great square of Lincoln's Inn. As he ascended the steps of Mr. Frederic Feedwell's house, a figure emerged from the next door, which, as it stood under the lamp, Lord de Clifford recognised with an exclamation of "God bless me! Nonplus, is that you?"

"Ah! how do, my lord? Should have been to see you, but only arrived in town at nine to-night by the Dover mail, and have been ever since here, with my friend Sergeant Puzzlecase, about another lawsuit that rascal Whoson Hatter has got me into; and seventy thousand pounds are not to be let to run away from one without a man looking which way they go. Ladies

well, eh? Miss Fanny married, and all that sort of thing; your brother has got *an-ice* place in Russia—ha! ha! ha! There's worse in the north, as the proverb says; and how are you, quite bang up to the mark, eh?"

"I hope I shall be to-morrow," said Lord de Clifford, "for I've a duel to fight."

"A duel! whew; fair and softly, as lawyers go to heaven. I'll inform against you, 'pon my soul I will; fighting is all nonsense, unless one's paid for it, which one never is in these 'piping' *and crying* 'times of peace,' as my friend Shakspeare has it."

Lord de Clifford was much of the major's way of thinking; but still, for the look of the thing, he was obliged to give a decided shake of the head as he replied, "It must be; so come with me, will you, up to Feedwell's rooms. I want him to be my second."

"Well, if you *will* fight, why don't you get your friend Fonnoir for a second? for he's long and dismal, like a winter's evening, and the very look of him, I should think, would frighten a man into an apology; but who's your mark, eh?"

"That d—d Tory, Cheveley."

"My stars and garters! why, I always thought he and you were as thick as mud in December."

"You thought wrong, then," growled Lord de Clifford, as Mr. Frederic Feedwell's door opened, and he cleared the first flight of stairs, followed at a slower pace by the portly figure of Major Nonplus. It being now "the very witching time of night," Frederic was in bed, but groaning amain, and tossing to and fro in the nightmare, like a whale on a sandbank. In the midst of the cosmetics on the toilet towered, like a cedar of Lebanon, his Hyperion wig, supported by a block not much thicker than its owner's head. The mirror was so covered with wax as scarcely to leave a bit of the glass visible, thereby proving his Catholic worship of himself, as he was evidently in the habit of lighting tapers before the shrine of his idolatry, and, to judge from appearances, had *waxed* fonder and fonder of his own image. About a dozen wedding rings, tied together with a piece of blue riband, and as many different locks of hair, much resembling those in hairdressers' shops, "affichéing" themselves as pupils of the "Tyrian dye," with a miniature of himself attached to a hair chain, formed part of the paraphernalia of the dressing-table.

"Come, get up, my good fellow, will you?" said Lord de Clifford, pushing Frederic with his stick, as one does a starfish on the seashore; "get up; I want you to take a message to a man for me."

"N-n-no more," muttered Frederic; "the truffles are bad, and the tongue should have been roasted 'à l'Espagnol.'"

"Come, turn out, my fine fellow, and don't lie there, giving tongue like a hound," said Major Nonplus, suiting the action to the word, with an emphatic slap upon the most defenceless portion of Mr. Frederic Feedwell's person, who, mechanically applying his hand to the injured spot, exclaimed,

"Oh! take it away, take it away; it's so d—d hard I never shall be able to digest it."

Here another push from Lord de Clifford completely awoke him; and perceiving that two *men* were standing by his bedside, he immediately put himself "en scène," by starting up, placing his hands before his eyes, and crying out,

"M-m-Mary! Caroline! what brought you both here together?"

"Ha! ha! ha! I look very like a Caroline, truly," said Major Nonplus; "so you must be the Miss Molly, my lord; but, I say, Feedwell," continued he, hooking the string of wedding rings off the table with the end of his cane, "how came you by this bunch of *crim. cons.*, eh?"

"Ah," said Frederic, with a dyspeptic sigh, "I've paid for them."

"That I'll be bound you did for *every one* of them," roared the major.

"That dreadful laugh," shrugged Frederic to Lord de Clifford, jerking the two fore fingers of his right hand above his head.

"Feedwell," said Lord de Clifford, "get up; I must fight to-morrow morning, or at least the next day, and you must be my second."

Now there was nothing Mr. Frederic Feedwell so much delighted in as being made a *personnage* of, having his name in the papers (no matter on what account), and being talked about, if it were only to be abused; so, rubbing his hands and springing out of bed, he exclaimed,

"Who is it, my d-d-dear fellow?"

"Oh, that d—d fellow, Cheveley."

Mr. Frederic Feedwell was a *true friend*, and, therefore, never missed an opportunity of infusing a little wormwood into his sweetest counsels or most sympathetic moments; consequently, he replied, as he doffed his nightcap, and donned his clothes,

"Oh, Lord Cheveley! the man who made that speech that the world has been ringing with; he certainly is the be-be-best speaker that has appeared for ages; it is to be hoped, my de-de-dear De Clifford, that he's not as good a shot as he is an orator, or you'll have no chance, you know." And up went Mr. Frederic Feedwell's two fingers, as if registering his prophecy on the ceiling.

"What d—d stuff you do talk, my dear Feedwell," said Lord de Clifford; and, ringing the bell violently, added, "have you any soda-water in the house?"

"Yes, plenty; but tell me how you got into this squ-squ-squabble with Lord Cheveley."

"Why, it's a foolish business altogether," replied Lord de Clifford, as he seated himself in a chair, stretched out his feet horizontally, pushed his hat over his eyes, and placed the head of his cane between his teeth; "I jostled against him coming out of the Haymarket, and telling him to get out of the way, he answered me devilish impertinently, *not, of course, seeing who I was:* one word brought on another, and I said he should hear from me, and there the matter rests till you go to him; but—"

"Of course, my dear fellow," stuttered Mr. Frederic Feedwell, hurrying his toilet as he spoke, and delighted in the prospect of a quarrel wherein his own personal safety was not the least endangered; "I'll go to him the first thing in the morning; but I shall be ready now in five minutes, and will walk home with you, where we can make all the necessary arrangements."

"Ay, exactly so," interposed Major Nonplus, as he poured out a large bumper of hock that had arrived with the soda-water.

"But I think," resumed Lord de Clifford, "that it might be settled in some way; for, you see, I want to speak on the Corn Laws on Thursday; and then this d—d election in two months, and altogether—not that *I* would make an apology, my dear Feedwell—but if you could get *him* to do so, you understand."

Mr. Frederic Feedwell did understand perfectly; but

being much addicted to what is vulgarly called "blowing the coals," he laughed as he replied,

"Ah! my dear fellow, 'facies tua computat annos.'" Lord de Clifford lowered, and rising with solemn anger from his seat, said coldly, "If you cannot be serious for one moment even on an occasion like this, I shall seek the assistance of some one else."

The amiable Frederic perceived he had gone too far; and by no means wishing to lose the support of Lord de Clifford's acquaintance, and passing in rapid review before his mind's eye the sundry dinners, and the innumerable petty squabbles that would take place in the ensuing election, he instantly changed his tone to one of friendly consideration, and said, as he placed his hand on Lord de Clifford's arm and drew him back from the door,

"My dear fellow, you quite mistake me; I only meant to say, what I always think, that I don't know so clever or so a-a-a-able a person anywhere as yourself; but we'll talk over this matter in Grosvenor-street," casting a significant look at Major Nonplus, which said, as plainly as look could say it, "When we are not 'gêné' by him."

"I think though," chimed in that worthy individual, as he paused between each mouthful of a second glass of hock, which he had taken to *taste*, having swallowed the first without that preliminary, "I think Lord de Clifford is quite right, that as he has a speech to make and an election coming on, there is no use in his fighting, but quite the contrary."

"I!" thundered Lord de Clifford, "I never said any such thing, sir."

"Well, then, you meant it, my dear lord, and that is the same thing."

"It is not the same thing, sir, and--and damn it, *I'm* going to fight, and I *will* fight."

"No, now, indeed, I don't think you'll have any occasion," persisted the poor one-idea'd major, pouring out a third relay of wine, "for the marquis is a very *gentlemanly* man, and I'm sure everything will be as amicably settled as you can wish. Very sound good wine, that; in capital order, and I'm in marching order; ha! ha! ha! so good-night, good-night; I hope I shall hear that it's all right to-morrow." And securing his umbrella, ever anxious to guard against water of any kind, he departed.

That night Mr. Frederic Feedwell passed in Grosvenor-street, concocting plans with Lord de Clifford how to manage, so as to get Lord Cheveley to *apologize* for the insult that had been offered to himself. Accordingly, at nine the following morning, Mr. Frederic Feedwell sallied forth, and Lord de Clifford, trusting implicitly to the great Frederic's diplomacy, paced up and down his library, spouting out his intended *impromptu* speech on the Corn Laws.

When Mr. Feedwell arrived at Lord Cheveley's house in Carlton Gardens, he found it undergoing repair, and, therefore, had to retrace his steps to the Clarendon.

"Pray, is Lord Cheveley at home?" inquired he of the porter.

"Really can't say, sir, but I'll call his servant." Sanford appearing, the same question was put to him; and after eying the querist with that sort of supercilious "Who on earth are *you?*" sort of look which servants bestow on persons of not very aristocratic appearance, when they are not chartered by being on their master's or mistress's visiting list, replied,

"He *is* at home, sir, but his lordship's bell has not rung yet."

"Will you give him this card," said Frederic, "and say I wish to see him on particular business?"

"Perhaps you'll be so good as to wait in the drawing-room, sir, till my lord's bell rings."

"I'll ge-ge-go into the drawing-room, but will thank you to give Lord Cheveley that card immediately, as the business is pe-pe-pe-pressing."

"May I ask, sir, if you come on the part of Lord de Clifford? for the marquis gave orders that he was to be informed if any one came from his lordship."

"I do, and shall be much obliged by Lord Cheveley's seeing me as soon as possible."

"I'll give your message, sir, directly," said Sanford, closing the drawing-room door as Mr. Frederic Feedwell drew a chair to the open window, with a laudable curiosity to see what Bond-street looked like at half past nine in the morning: but all was like his own eyes, wide, dim, and vacant. He was beginning to weary of the similitude, as it was now a quarter past ten, when suddenly he espied Fuzboz, sitting in a sort of Sardanapalus attitude, with folded arms and slouched beaver, in the very centre of an open hack cabriolet, a blue fus-

tian bag between his feet, and a half-bound quarto under his arm. He might have, and most probably had been, eating "mutton cold," as he had been confined at home for the last week with a great press of business, though he certainly had *not been* "cutting blocks with a razor;" for his chin, like Mr. Metcalf's tooth-brushes, was composed of "*real* bristles;" but Fuzboz was in the habit of "going the whole hog;" so no wonder.

"Fuzboz! Fuzboz!" cried Mr. Frederic Feedwell from the balcony, "stop one moment."

And accordingly, hearing his euphonious cognomen, Fuzboz looked up at the window from whence the sound proceeded, and ordered the driver to stop; while Mr. Frederic Feedwell, who did everything violently, rushed down stairs into the street; and, after having shaken Fuzboz's hydrophobia-looking hand, spluttered out,

"I only wanted to know at what hour I should be likely to find you at 'the Investigator' office to-day, as De-De-De Clifford is almost in for a duel with Lord Cheveley; but I've come down here to try and get him out of it. But, at all events, we must have a panegyric in 'the Investigator' on De Clifford whichever way the affair terminates."

"But, what? how? I mean, when did all this happen? Very odd he has not consulted me," said Fuzboz, looking leading articles at Mr. Frederic Feedwell.

"Oh, he's not had time, nor have I either, to tell you any more now; for he knocked me up at one this morning about it. But remember, my dear fellow, that Cheveley's a Te-Te-Te-Tory, and gave Lord Melford that terrible mauling about Lord Denham's business."

"Yes, yes, he shall be dealt with accordingly; but if you'll be down at half past three, and tell me all the particulars, I can better understand what's to be done, for just now I'm in a hurry too, on my way to the Moon office, to get a paragraph put in about Lady de Clifford's extravagance. Laura Priest's brother, you know, writes for the Moon; and as people are beginning to make themselves impertinently busy about some facts they have got hold of concerning De Clifford, it is necessary for us, and all his friends, to attack his wife in every covert way we can, in order to guard him against a meddling world."

"Qu-qu-quite right, my dear fellow; so 'vale' for the present."

This conversation was carried on in a whisper, while the cabman was arranging the decorations of his horse's head. And when Mr. Frederic Feedwell reascended to the drawing-room, he found that Lord Cheveley had not yet appeared, though the timepiece announced that it only wanted a quarter to eleven. Frederic looked wistfully at the prawns, cold chicken, and paté de Strasbourg on the breakfast-table, and thought, with a sigh, what sacrifices to friendship (!) the "flat, stale, and unprofitable usages of this world," compel a man to make.

There is something tragic in deep affliction, that always goads people into soliloquizing; and Frederic sighed forth, as he raised his eyes tenderly to the looking-glass, "'A ogni cosa è rimedio fuora, qu'alla morte,' says the proverb; but I can add, or *hunger* in another man's house, when you come to him on an affair of honour." The word was scarcely uttered, when the door opened, and Lord Cheveley advanced, apologizing for having detained Mr. Feedwell so long, and, seating himself, begged Frederic would do the same.

"I am co-co-come, my lord," commenced the latter, "on the part of Lord de Clifford, touching a misunderstanding that occurred between him and your lordship under the portico of the Haymarket Theatre last night." Here Frederic paused, evidently expecting the aid of an interruption; but Cheveley continuing silent, and merely bowing, he resumed: "I must say, though I say it entirely from myself, that I could wish to see this matter amicably adjusted, thinking it a thousand pities that the valuable lives of two persons who *have been* friends"—(here a slight curl of Cheveley's lip induced Mr. Frederic Feedwell to add)—"I believe I am correct in using the term 'friends,' my lord—should be risked for so te-te-te-trifling a cause."

As he finished this peroration, Lord Cheveley recognised the gastronomic Giovanni who had deplored Lady de Clifford's temptations at the Athenæum; and a mingled feeling of indignation and disgust coming over him, he replied, coldly and haughtily, "With regard to risking my own or another's life, sir, I have fixed, and, I am sorry to say, peculiar, opinions. With regard to a misunderstanding between Lord de Clifford and myself, there was none, for we understood each other perfectly; but, with regard to an apology, whether he—"

Here Sanford entered with a card. "The gentleman is anxious to see you, my lord."

But, before Cheveley could take the card off the salver, and tell Sanford that he could not see any one then, Major Nonplus (for it was no less a personage) followed his credentials, and, panting like a seal out of water, exclaimed,

"Delighted to see you, my lord; knew, if it was only for the sake of old lang syne, you'd be at home to *me;* so came up without more ado. Hope I may be instrumental in arranging all this business *comfortably.*"

"What business?" inquired Cheveley, annoyed at his intrusion, and not imagining he could possibly allude to the duel.

"Why, this tiff between you and Lord de Clifford, to be sure; but I'm certain *he's* no hostile wishes, but quite the contrary: for, as he said last night in my friend Feedwell's chambers, having a speech to make on the Corn Laws, and an election coming on, and all that sort of thing, it would be rather provoking if he was to be killed before he got through either."

Cheveley could not help smiling at perceiving that Major Nonplus had lost none of his wonted tact in serving his friends; but Frederic looked oyster-knives at him, and wished that he might that very day order mushrooms and get toadstools, as he turned to Cheveley, stammering,

"My lord, Major Ne-Ne-Ne-Nonplus makes some strange mistake; for, though Lord de Clifford did say something about his speech on the Corn Laws and his approaching election in my room last night, yet it certainly was not coupled with any reference whatever to his meeting with your lordship, and—"

"That's right, Fred; go it, my boy; never stick at anything to serve a friend; and lies 'au blanc' are nothing more than lentils after the same fashion." And, so saying, the major gave Mr. Feedwell a slap on the back, which must, had he eaten that morning, have considerably impeded his digestion.

"Whatever cogent reasons Lord de Clifford may have for not wishing to go out with me," said Cheveley, "they cannot exceed *my* determination not to fight with him; and—"

Here Frederic rallied, and, putting on a bullying tone, said, "If you do not *wish* to accept Lord de Clifford's challenge, I shall be happy to convey any apology to him with which your lordship may charge me."

"In the first place, sir," replied Cheveley, "*as yet I* have received *no* challenge from Lord de Clifford: if he sent any, it is still in your custody, for you have not delivered it to me. In the next place, it is Lord de Clifford who does not *wish* to fight with me, and I who do not *choose* to fight with him. For apologies, in accepting his, when he sends it, he will have received mine; neither his *speech on the Corn Laws nor his election* shall receive any impediments from me; and now, sir," concluded Cheveley, ringing the bell, and pointing to the door, "I have the honour of wishing you a very good-morning."

Frederic, seeing that he had a very resolute person to deal with, and that Major Nonplus, according to custom, had completely let the cat out of the bag with regard to Lord de Clifford, and marred everything, thought it politic to make good his retreat; and muttering, for his own satisfaction, when he got outside the drawing-room door, that he was sure Lord de Clifford would be happy to accept *Lord Cheveley's apology*, repaired first to Fuzboz, where they mutually concocted a paragraph, highly laudatory of Lord de Clifford's honour and valour, and more than intimating that nothing but Lord Cheveley's *reluctance* to fight had prevented a hostile meeting between them; concluding with an assertion that it was in defence of the liberal and enlightened political principles Lord de Clifford had always advocated with such consistent firmness that the misunderstanding had originated. This done, he returned to Lord de Clifford, making up the best story he could, and entirely attributing his not having brought him off with more flying colours to Major Nonplus's usual kind zeal in serving his friends. Meanwhile, the worthy major remained to breakfast with Cheveley, and soon succeeded in making the "pâté de Strasbourg" look as foolish as he had done Mr. Frederic Feedwell.

CHAPTER XV.

"*Whoso* findeth a wife, findeth a *good thing*, and obtaineth favour of the Lord."—*Proverbs* xviii., 22.

"What frantic voices rise at times,
Wailing, or glorying in their crimes;
As faith, or phrensy, or despair,
Inspire their latest, wildest prayer."
READE'S *Deluge.*

"Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell,
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell;
Of the balmy air, and the free blue sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye."
FELICIA HEMANS

IT was an unaccountable thing, but so it was, that as the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins advanced in his designs upon Miss Lavinia MacScrew, he also progressed in his evangelical tenets. He had lately written a tract, entitled "The Warming-pan of Faith: to take the Chill off the Deathbed of Sinners." A new stage-coach had also been recently established at "The Mitre" at Triverton, the announcement of which, owing to a false punctuation, ran thus:

"THE STAR
"A New Light, Day Coach,"

and was consequently supposed, by all persons of "the right way of thinking," to have been established for the safe conveyance of *heavenly bodies* by the pious Hoskins. So true is Seneca's observation, "that every man (ay, and woman too) takes notes for his or her own study. Put a grammarian to a Virgil, he never heeds the philosophy, but the verse. In the same meadow the cow finds grass, the dog starts a hare, and the stork snaps a lizard. Tully's 'De Republica' finds work both for the philosopher, the philologer, and the grammarian. The philosopher wonders how it was possible to speak so much against justice. The philologer makes the observation, that Rome had two kings: the one without a father, and the other without a mother; for it is a question who was Servius's mother, and

of Ancus's father there is not so much as any mention. The grammarian takes notice that *reapse* is used for *reipsa*, and *sepse* for *seipse*. And so every man makes his notes for his own purpose." And thus it was even at Triverton and Blichingly: where one half of the inhabitants conceived "The Star" to be a sort of Elijah's car, designed by the exemplary Peter to convey them ultimately to heaven, while others thought it a lucrative but disgraceful speculation, derogatory to the dignity of a functionary of the church; and, as frequently happens, when the world are good enough to divide and differ in their opinions of an individual, both were wrong, for the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins had nothing on earth to do with it. No: his was by no means

"The love of the moth for 'The Star,'"

but the love of dividends, debentures, and three per cent. consols, unencumbered, save with a mortgage of Miss MacScrew.

Nine months had passed away in a series of constant attentions on his part to the fair Lavinia. Game, lampreys, oysters, char, and Dunstable larks, were the constant accompaniments of his visits in Lavender Lane: so that, like a file, he had literally eaten his way into the heart of Miss MacScrew. I use this simile, for nothing less could have had any effect upon so hard a substance as composed the anatomy of that amiable spinster's left side.

Still, as midsummer advanced, "the lovely young Lavinia" absented herself from church, dreading lest her Peter should be rash enough to attempt to win his wager; but hearing from the neighbours that he had never even alluded to it, and being, moreover, much tempted by some finery her mother, whom she always designated by the endearing epithet of "*mem*ma," had sent her, she took courage the last Sunday in June, of a very sultry day, to display it all. It consisted of a white, stamped, card-board bonnet, beautifully relieved with *the* black hollyhocks; a muslin dress, lined with daffadowndilly-coloured glazed calico; a muslin spencer, lined with the same material, only *green*. Being exceedingly *warm*, she thought a goose-down tippet, from whence much of the down had absconded, showing here and there mangey patches of discoloured white

calico, would have a cool effect; while a pair of wash-leather gloves, and nankeen boots laced up the front, completed this charming toilette. Parasol she had none, but she had what did duty as such—a Chinese umbrella, round and flat at the top like a mushroom, with a thick bamboo stick, which finished its likeness to the fungi genus. Thus equipped, she sallied from her domicil in Lavender Lane, up the High-street, down Silver-street, and so on to Cross-street, where the church was situated; and, after having bestowed so much care on the decoration of her person, it must have been a great source of satisfaction to Miss MacScrew to think that the fairest lady that ever walked in the "cortége" never attracted half so much attention as she did perambulating these thoroughfares of the flourishing town of Blichingly.

Arrived at the church-door, she was surprised to see not only the Symmons's blue coach, the Tymmons's green fly, and the doctor's gig, but also Lords Cheveley, Sudbury, and Shufileton's carriages, with divers other unknown and anti-country-looking equipages; a stage-coach also, full of "the officers" from Triverton, drove up just as the last toll of the bell sonnded.

"Bless me!" said Miss MacScrew, as she inflicted fruitless poundings on the stiff and rusty spring of the Chinese umbrella; "all the world seem to have come to Blichingly church to-day; hope it's not a charity sermon; quite ruinous, so many of them; however, I've got two *new* farthings that *mem*ma gave me; they'll look like sovereigns in the plate, like sovereigns, and I need not give again for some time." Here she renewed her attacks upon the umbrella, but in vain; so, popping her head in at the church-door, she beckoned to the sextoness, and consigning the celestial umbrella to her care, desired her to leave it in the vestry till service was over, as it would not shut. The church was indeed crowded to excess, and notwithstanding the indecorum of such a proceeding, an ill-suppressed titter ran through the congregation the moment Miss MacScrew appeared. Nor was it till she was fairly seated in Mrs. Tymmons's pew, which, being immediately opposite the pulpit, was partly concealed by it, that this unhallowed mirth subsided.

Mrs. Tymmons looked redder, and fatter, and hotter than ever. Mr. T. had had his last bill of costs paid by

the dowager Lady de Clifford the week before, and had, consequently, got an up-in-the-world sort of look, peculiar to attorneys with fat faces, snub noses, and "*fine families*."

Miss Seraphina had made every preparation for a faint by taking off her gloves, untying the strings of her bonnet, placing a bottle of salts by the side of her prayer-book, and her shoulder in juxtaposition with that of her brother Joseph, that he might be ready to receive her in his arms when the catastrophe took place. Miss Isabella looked every five minutes at the painted window behind her, that "*the officers*" might have the pleasure of seeing her face. Mr. Rush looked, as usual, the essence of sentiment and sensibility, and even more martial than the officers, inasmuch as, having adopted the present fashion for the hair, he wore his firelocks on his shoulders. Master Grimstone, though in church, was as busy as usual, for he had sucked the green strings of his velvet cap quite blue, rubbed off all the blacking of his shoes on his socks, ran a pin into his sister Isabella's arm, and double-dog's-eared all his mother's prayer-book. Notwithstanding these trifling incidents, the service proceeded without any interruption, till a linnet flew in at the window, and, lighting on one of Miss MacScrew's black hollyhocks, endeavoured to peck the artificial petals. This greatly amused "*the officers*," and so excited the poetical imagination of Mr. Rush Tymmons, that he could not resist the strong impulse of noting down on the spot, on the flyleaf of his hymn-book, some *very original* ideas about the human heart being often lured on by false hopes and appearances, like the bird on Miss MacScrew's bonnet! But even poetry must yield to preaching.

Mr. Hoskins ascended the pulpit; Miss MacScrew fidgeted on her seat even more than usual. Mr. Rush closed the hymn-book. Silence reigned around; and at the end of a sufficiently solemn pause after the prayer, Peter hemmed three times, and, in a distinct and sonorous voice, gave out the following text, keeping his eyes steadily fixed on Miss MacScrew.

"My beloved brethren, you will find in the lxxiii. Psalm, at the 23d and 26th verses, these words:

"'Nevertheless I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to

glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside *Thee*.'"

Mr. Hoskins then proceeded, without any reference whatever to his text, to assure the whole of his congregation that they were going, one and all, by the railroad of sin, straight to the infernal regions, whose fires would consume them till the *end of eternity*.* He warned them also against the abomination of balls and plays, which were likely to demoralize the neighbourhood during the approaching election, and the civil authorities he especially admonished against gormandizing dinners; "for what saith St. Paul: 'Be ye not drunk with wine.' And oh, my beloved friends, those midnight orgies called suppers are of equal iniquity. Where the mayor and corporation, who have souls as well as bodies, though people might not believe it, go into the idolatries of the ancient Egyptians, and appear to worship *Ham*!" But this was the exciting and stirring part of Mr. Hoskins's discourse: he soon grew soporific and consolatory; he told them that "heaven was a feather-bed that would never want making! and faith a pillow that would never want shaking!"† At this point he perceived that the whole of the congregation (except Miss MacScrew, whom nervousness kept awake) had suited the action to the word, and fallen fast asleep. This was the consummation he had so devoutly wished, and for which reason he had assumed his most evangelical voice, and spun out his exordium to an hour's length: giving three groans, he resumed, "Oh ye generation of vipers! I speak unto you the words of everlasting life, and you sleep on your posts; in vain I say unto you, watch; watch, for it is not the things of this world I bid you watch; and ye are of the earth, earthy. Far different would it be were I to pour into your ears the tunings of sinful merriment; you would not sleep nor slumber then, but rejoice, as did the soul of Saul at the strains of the harp of David. Here then, oh children of wrath, prove to your God how much less you attend to him than to the meanest thing which one of his creatures has made!" So saying, Pe-

* It was the late Edward Irving who first made this very interesting discovery in chronology.

† Ridiculous and far-fetched as this may appear, the author heard it nearly verbatim, with more that is really too absurd to write, from a Methodist preacher, about four months ago.

ter drew a kit from his pocket, and struck up, "Haste to the Wedding,"* which having completely awoke all who slept, he concluded with a solemn reprobation of his parishioners for sleeping over his sermon and waking to the sound of a fiddle.

Miss MacScrew had fainted, for she felt as if her life had "sold out." Not so Peter: "*Io Triumphe*" was written in every line of his countenance. He had caused it to be cautiously but widely disseminated, that on the last Sunday of the month it was his intention to play his bold strike for a wife, and accordingly the church had filled beyond his most sanguine expectations, and the congregation appeared as reluctant to separate as they had been eager to assemble. "*The Officers*" in particular, who were profuse in their offers of assistance to the amiable invalid, remarking, at the same time, that it was rather anticipating events to faint before the wedding, however orthodox and indispensable it was to do so during the ceremony. But, at length, with the aid of Miss Seraphina's salts, Miss Isabella's fan, and Mrs. Tymmons's "Poor thing," Miss MacScrew revived sufficiently to be conducted to the vestry by Mr. Tymmons, who whispered that he would draw up the marriage-settlements gratis, but not to mention this to "*Mrs. T.*," as *gentlemen* with large families could not exactly venture to tell everything to their wives, though there was not a more indulgent or forgiving wife anywhere than his; "Still, money is money, ma'am, as *you* know, and children are children, as *I* know," concluded Mr. Tymmons, as he opened the vestry door and placed Miss MacScrew in an armchair, where the fascinating Peter instantly fell at her feet, and, seizing her hand, exclaimed,

"Mine, *all* mine! by all that's fair; and, even when the first raptures of the honeymoon are over, *augh* feel that the *stirling* qualities of my Lavinia will make her as valuable in her Peter's estimation as she is now."

Here Peter attempted to execute a kiss, but Miss MacScrew repulsed the vicious manifestation with maidenly propriety.

"Ah! my beloved Lavinia," sighed Peter, "you are right; I cannot lay claim to a *freehold* until I have a

* This occurrence really happened about twenty two years ago.

life interest; give me, then, the dividend of a promise, and tell me when you will transmute Miss MacScrew into Mrs. Hoskins; this day week? shall I say this day week? or, rather, *will you* say this day week?"

"Oh! this day week is such a short time, such a very short time, you know: shan't be able to write to *mem*ma: generally write to her by sending a newspaper; and seeing it directed by me, she knows I'm well, which is quite satisfactory."

"Well, then, let us send mamma a newspaper with our marriage in it," suggested Peter; "and then she'll know that you are not only well, but, what is more extraordinary, well married!"

"Oh, but *mem*ma might be angry; angry, you know, if I did not tell her first."

"Well, then, you must assure her that you never did so before, and, *I* sincerely hope, will never do so again; and, after that, I'm sure she cannot be so unreasonable as to continue angry," urged Peter.

"But tell me," said Miss MacScrew, with a vain effort to waive the subject, "tell me, when your first name is Nathaniel, why everybody calls you Peter?"

"Why, when *augh* was young, you must know, *augh* was a sad pickle, and my brothers and sisters nicknamed me Salt Peter; so, never having been at Eton, *augh* did not care for the *salt*, you see, but have retained the name of Peter ever since; and now having told you why I am called Peter, tell me, thou golden dream of all my hopes, when I may call *you mine*."

Here a knocking was heard at the door, and Peter, thinking it might be the clerk, said, in his parochial voice,

"Enter, beloved."

But it was only Mrs. Tymmons, Miss Seraphina and Miss Isabella Tymmons, Messieurs Joseph and Rush Tymmons, and Master Grimstone Tymmons, who all and each began interceding with Miss MacScrew for their cousin Peter, whom, they could bear witness, had fairly won her on her own terms.

Whether it was that she feared his resorting to legal and compulsory measures in the event of her refusing, or an habitual dislike to being asked for anything, but, in less than a quarter of an hour, Miss MacScrew had acceded to Peter's proposals of espousing him on the following Monday; and Mrs. Tymmons, who understood those sort of things, abdicated the *fly* in favour of

the bride and bridegroom elect, who returned tête-à-tête to Lavender Lane, to arrange all farther preliminaries; the first of which was to write to a Mrs. Crump, the proprietor of furnished apartments in Birmingham, to secure them on the wedding-day, Mr. Hoskins having business in that town, and not liking, at the first onset, to frighten his bride by the extravagance of going to a hotel.

All unnecessary delays he had carefully avoided, by having taken the precaution to get Mr. Tymmons to draw up the marriage-settlements in advance, leaving certain interstices to be filled up with whatever stipulations he might be able to extort from Miss MacScrew, or she should insist upon from him.

And now we will leave Miss MacScrew to prepare her bridal rags, and Peter to spend her money in imagination, while we pay a visit to Mrs. Stokes, and find out what has happened in Blichingly since we were last there. Cheveley had that morning accidentally gone to Blichingly church, not in the least aware of Mr. Hoskins's intended disgraceful exhibition, nor could he participate in the excessive mirth it occasioned, as he felt how much religion was outraged and decency violated by such an indecorous proceeding, and thought Mr. Hoskins deserved to be stripped of his gown.

Having ordered the carriage to put up at "The De Clifford Arms," according to the promise he had made Mrs. Stokes in Lee's cottage, he had given orders that it should remain there, and he would walk on to the inn, for Cheveley had an innate love for English villages, and never felt less unhappy than when he was exploring them.

When he arrived at the De Clifford Arms, Richard Brindal was sitting on a bench outside the door, with a pipe in his mouth, a pot of porter beside him, and the "Triverton Independent" in his hand, which he was spelling over to himself aloud. "The old story," muttered he, as Cheveley entered the inn; "nothing but jails and gibbets for the poor, and yet they tell us a deal about liberty at the *lections;* the liberty o' scragging us poor folks, I *spose* they means."

But where was Mrs. Stokes? The day that she had so long wished for, hoped for, dreamed of, had at length arrived. Lord Cheveley's horses stood in her stable, his carriage in her yard, and himself in her house; then

where was she? Why, in a very unusual place, and occupied in a very unusual manner, with her arms round her husband's neck, sobbing upon his shoulder. When Cheveley stood before them, John Stokes perpetrated sundry bows, his right foot moving to and fro like the pendulum of a clock, and propping his wife up to the right till she regained a perpendicular position, he whispered,

"My dear, the mar*cus*."

But even these magic words produced no greater effect than to make Mrs. Stokes dry her eyes hurriedly, with the corner of her apron, and exclaim, wringing her hands passionately,

"My lord, they no more took the things than you did; it's all a piece of wickedness to ruin them. Try, try, for Heaven's sake! my lord, to get them righted."

"Get who righted?" asked Cheveley. "I'm sorry to see you so distressed; but let me know the cause of it, and perhaps I may serve you."

"There, Nancy, don't take on so; you hear his lordship's goodness: sit down, and I'll tell him the rights on it. You must know, my lord," continued Stokes, "that last Monday Lord de Clifford and the old lady came down to the Park, and there was a great many different workpeople, masons, carpenters, and such-like, had up there to do odd jobs about the place. Among others, old Lee was sent for to do something to a window-frame in Mrs. Frump's room: this made him very angry, and he went himself up to Mr. Grindall at the Park, and told him that never, as long as he lived, would he handle a hammer for Lord de Clifford or his mother, unless it was to knock a nail in their coffins, and *that* he'd do with pleasure. Grindall called him an impertinent old rascal, and told him never to come near the place again. Now your lordship will please to observe, that it was in the audit-room this took place, and the audit-room is at the foot of the back stairs leading to Mrs. Frump's room. Well, the next day there was a hue and cry over all the place, that a watch of the old lady's, and two diamond shirt-buttons of my lord's, had been stolen out of Mrs. Frump's room, where all my lord's and lady's things were laying at sixes and sevens, half unpacked. Grindall instantly procured a search-warrant, and not only all the houses of the workpeople, but every house in the village, not excepting mine, was ransacked for the lost things: but, not to keep your

lordship too long, I'm now coming to the upshot of the story. My missus was drinking tea with Mary Lee last Thursday evening; she was sitting at work, and the old man was reading, when the officers, with Grindall at their head, walked into the cottage. Lee had heard of the other houses being searched, and, therefore, was not surprised at seeing them; but, without so much as looking at Grindall, rose up, and civilly gave all his keys to the officers, telling Mary to leave the room; but she only stood the nearer to her father, while the child clung to her as if it was frightened, but never said one word, though it looked every now and then from behind its mother at the strange men. Nancy says it was enough to turn a stone to down. Well, they searched the whole house, and nothing could they find; but when they were going away, 'You have forgotten to look in the old walnut-tree desk, that I keep my bills in,' said Lee; at this Grindall sprung forward, but Lee pushed him back, saying, '*he* should not lay a finger on anything belonging to him:' in doing this, Grindall's foot slipped, and he fell with his head against the leg of a table, but was not much hurt, though he threatened to have the law of Lee for what he called an assault; but even the officers declared that there had been no such thing, and then went on to open the desk; when, turning everything out, what should they find but the watch and the diamond buttons! at which no one looked surprised but Nancy and Lee himself, but he more than her; for he seemed as if the sight on 'em turned him to stone. Mary looked wild-like for a few minutes, but suddenly flashing, as she does, poor thing! when she gets one of her mad fits, she broke from the child's arm, and seizing Grindall's arm, she shrieked out, 'It's all a vile, vile plot; but he shall not ruin my poor old father as he has ruined me; he never took the things. If he *must* say, and will have it that they were brought here by any of us, it was *I* that stole them. Drag me to prison then, or where you please, but touch *him* on your peril;' and poor Mary sank on the ground and clasped her father's feet. But Grindall's fit for his work; for he answered her with a sneer, 'No, no, miss, we ain't going to part ye; you shall both have the same privileges, and be comfortably lodged in Triverton jail together.'

"So, to make a long story short, my lord, the poor

old man, his daughter, and grandchild, were that very night taken to prison, where they are all likely to lie for the next three months, till the 'sizes come on. And my firm belief is," concluded Stokes, striking the table with his clinched hand, "that Lee no more stole the things than I did."

"No, nor than his lordship did," sobbed Mrs. Stokes.

"Then who do you suppose was wicked enough to place the things in Lee's desk?" asked Cheveley.

"The devil, or some one as bad, my lord, I should say," replied Stokes.

"I never thought downright bad of Lord de Clifford till now," said Mrs. Stokes; "but, God forgive me! I can't help thinking, with poor Mary, that it's all a diabolical plot of his to get them out of the way."

"I should hope," said Cheveley, "that he was incapable of such wickedness, and that the mystery—for mystery there evidently is—will soon be solved, to the clearing of those poor Lee's characters as well as his. But one thing I don't comprehend, how it was that Mary Lee fell a victim to Lord de Clifford's arts; for surely his personal appearance must have been too well known at Blichingly not to have been recognised through the trifling disguise of a mere change of dress."

"No, there it is, my lord," said Stokes; "he never was here since he had been a very little child till that time he first saw poor Mary. None of us knew his appearance; for he used to go all about the village in that farmer's dress, and even come and smoke in our bar; and 'twas not till just before he went abroad that I saw him as Lord de Clifford, and thought I never saw such a likeness in all my life to William Dale! but till I saw his letters to Mary, signed William Dale, and compared them with those to me signed De Clifford, I never could believe that they were one and the same person. But I never knew a good Grimstone yet; they're like the foxes' cubs, there's not a best among them."

"Poor people!" said Cheveley, musingly; "what prison did you say they were in?"

"Triverton, my lord."

"Well, have the goodness to order my carriage; I'll see if anything can be done for them."

"God bless you for that, my lord," said Mrs. Stokes, "and for what you have already done for them."

As soon as the carriage was ready, Cheveley depart-

ed, bidding Mrs. Stokes keep up her spirits, as he was sure that God would not long allow the innocent to suffer for the guilty; and of the innocence of the Lee's he did not entertain the least doubt.

"How many there are in this world," thought Cheveley, as the carriage rolled on to Triverton, "who upon circumstantial evidence would be ready to condemn this poor old man and his daughter, never recollecting that misfortunes are like mice; and that, where one has crept in, hundreds are sure to follow: for in the moral as in the material world,

"'The great first' cause is always 'least understood.'

"Mary Lee, from having been betrayed by the machinations of a heartless profligate, is, of course, looked upon by the discriminating portion of society as capable of anything and everything, while the author of her misery struts unsuspected and uncensured through the world. Her father, being deserted and shunned, on the strength of his daughter's seeming dereliction from virtue, by all who had been his companions, receives kindness from none but gipsies and outcasts; consequently, as evil communications proverbially corrupt good manners, he must, of necessity, have degenerated into a thief and a felon! Oh, world! world! how weary I am of your false judgments; your envy, malice, hatred, and uncharitableness; your hollowness and your hypocrisy; your fair words and your foul deeds; your ovations to the strong and your oppressions to the weak; your libellous defamations of the unprotected and your lying defences of the powerful. If this be human nature, I'd rather be a dog and beg to it, than be a man and bear it."

Here the carriage stopped before the door of the town-hall at Triverton, which was at the opposite side of the market-place to the jail, which stood near the abbey, into which well-dressed and happy-looking people of all ages were flocking to three-o'clock prayers. Cheveley got out and walked across to the prison, whose high and ponderous walls seemed saturated with gloom beyond the power of the summer sun and balmy air to dissipate. In answer to Cheveley's knock, the door turned slowly on its hinges, and the porter inquired his business.

"Are there not an old man and his daughter here of the name of Lee?" asked he.

"I really don't know, sir, but I'll ask the jailer, if you'll step in."

And, accordingly, he walked into the large empty court, where every now and then indistinct yells of boisterous mirth broke upon the silence from the other side of the building. During the few minutes that the porter was absent, a knock came to the door, which being repeated, as though the applicant was impatient, Cheveley tried to open it; but, not understanding its mysteries, was obliged to desist till the porter returned, which he did almost immediately, announcing that the jailer would come in a minute. As he was speaking, the knock was repeated still louder than before; and upon opening it, perceiving no one but a little ragged boy, with sunburnt rosy cheeks, black, wicked-looking eyes, no shoes or stockings, a newly-peeled switch in one hand, and a small basket in the other, while round his head was the rim of what had once been a blue cloth cap, the porter's dignity felt somewhat scandalized at having been hurried into attending to so insignificant an intruder, and eying Freddy Flips (for he it was who had come as ambassador from Madge Brindal), exclaimed, "Hey day! great cry and little wool, truly; what may you want, you catfed young knave?"

"I want to see John Lee, if you please, sir, or his daughter Mary."

"And what do you want to see them for, my boy?" asked Cheveley, in a kind voice.

Here Freddy, who in general had impudence enough at his command to have supplied all Ireland, looked down at his shoeless feet, and began splitting the switch he held into ribands, as he replied, in a low voice, never once raising his eyes,

"I've a letter and some flowers, sir, for Mary from Madge, some cherries for little William, and—a bone for Wasp."

"Well," said Cheveley, smiling, "will you trust these things with me, as I am going to see them, and perhaps you would come back in an hour in case there should be any answer to the letter?"

"And will you really, sir," said the boy, looking up in Cheveley's face delightedly as he extended the basket towards him, "will you really take charge of them?"

"I will."

"The flowers for Mary?"

"Yes."

"And the cherries for William?"

"Yes."

"And the bone for the dog, too?"

"Yes, and the bone for the dog, too," said Cheveley, smiling, as he took the basket.

"Thank you, sir," said Freddy; "I'm sure it's very kind of you, and I'll be back in an hour." So saying, he bounded off like a will-o'-the-wisp, leaving Cheveley to speak to the jailer, who had just hobbled up; for, from the pottle-deep potations of years, he was troubled with the gout. Seeing a gentleman (a class in whom honest Davie Darby delighted, for his pockets always felt the heavier, and his heart, ay, and, for company's sake, his head too, the lighter, after their visits to the prison), he began bowing most obsequiously, when Cheveley begged to be conducted to Lee's cell.

As Davie limped on before, he began pointing out to his companion all the *comforts* of the prison. "There, sir, be so good as to look through this here side of the gallery, and you'll see the treadmill; fine, wholesome exercise as ever was; and out *yander* is the court where the prisoners *amuse their*selves when they're tired o' work; and these here large baskets of bread and cheese *is* for the prisoners' suppers. So you see, sir, they've every comfort, if they would but think so, and, what's more, there's nothing *promiscus* or *on*certain about it, for they're sure of the same to-morrow as they have to-day, and so on *reglar* till they're turned off, and then, *in* course, there's an end of all their wants. As I often tell them, and I'm sure the chaplain couldn't talk to them more *hedifying* like, I says to 'em, says I, 'You transportable, ill-favoured gibbetarians you, how happy you ought to be that you're freeborn Englishmen, and live in a country where *sich* jails *is pervided* for you as this.' But lor! sir, they're so hardened, that it makes no more impression on them than if you was to talk to the wall or this bunch of keys! howsomdever, I does my duty, and it's a satisfaction when one knows that one's conscience has no chance of escape. A prison's the place to larn the world in, for here we know the worst as can happen, and that's what *I* calls the greatest happiness in life."

Here Davie was obliged to take breath, and Cheveley had, at length, an opportunity of making some inquiries about the Lees.

"I hope," said he, "that this poor old man and his daughter are as comfortably lodged as the place they are in will allow."

"For that matter, sir," replied Davie, "comfortable lodgings are not to be had for nothing in prison any more than out of it; and them as has nothing can't expect nothing, which is but reasonable, you'll allow, sir."

"Well, but how much would it cost a week to provide them with good food and good beds while they remain in prison?"

Here Davie began to consider, not what would come under the denomination of either, but how much, as he himself termed it in his mental calculations, he could *stick* Cheveley for.

"Why, let me see, there's two on 'em, the old man and the young gal. Now there's nothing at all vacant in the way of apartments just now, unless wife and I was to give up two of our own rooms, which would be particklar inconvenient, and therefore come more expensive, you see, sir."

Cheveley did see clearly Mr. Darby's drift, but merely replied,

"Allowing all that, in a word, how much would it be?"

"Why, sir, to feed 'em too, I could not do it under four guineas a week."

"Could I see the rooms you mean to give them?"

"Yes, sir, certainly, if you'll take the trouble of turning back again; the house you may see from this, there, that small house next the governor's, across the court," said Davie, pointing to it with his middle finger; "delightful sitivation too, sir; for when the judges and barristers is down at the '*sizes*, we can hear them laughing and carousing at dinner quite plain, as our house is at the back of the 'Golden Fleece,' where they always puts up."

"These must be delightful sounds indeed to the poor prisoners," said Cheveley, smiling.

"To be sure they must, sir," assented Davie, "and this makes the apartments well worth half a guinea a week more to any prisoner that's fortinate enough to get 'em."

"Very likely; but I think four guineas a week was what you said."

"Yes, yes, by all means, sir, and I never goes back from my word."

Here they arrived at Mr. Darby's door. Upon that gentleman's lifting the latch, he found his better half fast asleep in a high-backed armchair, a Bible on her lap turned upside down, and a black cat with a red collar, also indulging in a siesta on her shoulder. On a round, three-legged oak table before her, a tray with two cups on it was laid for tea, and the kettle was boiling clamorously. Yet, notwithstanding these preparations for the Chinese beverage, there was a genial odour of Geneva (the spirit, not the waters) diffused through the whole apartment that was peculiarly oppressive to those who were not accustomed to it. The decorations of the room consisted of coloured paper fly-traps suspended from the ceiling; and two or three ears of Indian corn, pumpkins, ostrich eggs, and peacock's feathers, diversified the range of old teapots and cups that graced the chimneypiece, with festoons of birds' eggs branching from each side of a large silver watch that hung from a nail in the centre of the wall over the chimneypiece. All round the walls were pinned "last dying speeches" and woodcuts of celebrated murderers and housebreakers; while on the top of a high chest of drawers that stood behind, or, rather, by the side of a small door that opened upon a flight of narrow stairs leading to the upper apartments, was a cast of Thurtell, and the bone of one of the pork chops he had eaten after murdering Ware.

"Betty, I say, Betty," cried Mr. Darby, chucking Mrs. D. under the chin till she woke with the pain of biting her own tongue, "it's too soon to lock up for the night yet; get up and show this gemmlan the rooms; he wants them for some prisoners."

And as Mrs. Darby courtesied herself quite awake, her husband gave her a telegraphic look, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder at Cheveley, which she perfectly understood to mean, "I've done him."

She consequently redoubled her civilities as she went up stairs before him to show the rooms, which were small, and contained a bed in each, as clean as white dimity curtains and well scrubbed floors could make them, while outside the windows were rows of green flowerpots containing balsams and mignionette, which gave the rooms a fresh and cheerful appearance, es-

pecially as the windows were perfectly bright and clean.

"Let me see," said Cheveley; "the assizes will not be till September."

"Yes, sure, sir," courtesied Mrs. Darby.

"And four guineas a week is sixteen guineas a month," resumed Cheveley: "well, here is the first month in advance;" and as he threw the money down upon the table, Mr. Darby nimbly transferred it to his own pocket, though not without the ceremony of bowing over every coin, his wife backing each bow with a courtesy.

"I shall call here occasionally to see how these poor people get on," said Cheveley; "and if they are not well cared for in every way, remember, I shall deduct one third from the next month's rent."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Darby, raising her hands and eyes to the ceiling, as if shocked at any one being able to suspect her of not doing everything that was right, "you may depend no one ever wants for *nothing* in *this* house!"

"Well, I hope not," said Cheveley. "But now show me the way to Lee's cell, and let these rooms be got ready for them immediately, as I should like to see them settled in them before I go."

"It shall be done, sir," said Mrs. Darby, as Cheveley walked away with her husband.

After retracing their steps through the prison, and ascending one story higher than they had done before, Davie stopped before a small door, and detaching the ponderous bunch of keys from his girdle, selected the key belonging to it, which, as it turned in the rusty wards, echoed dismally through the corridor.

"Have the goodness to leave us for half an hour," said Cheveley to Darby, as he opened the door.

"Very good, sir," replied the latter, closing it again and locking it from without. Notwithstanding the noise the opening and shutting of the door had made, Cheveley stood for a few seconds within the cell without any of the inmates having moved. The straggling and half-intercepted rays of light that streamed athwart the gloom from the high narrow grating near the ceiling, made it difficult at first to distinguish the objects they scarcely served to reveal. In one corner was a straw pallet, on which lay Mary Lee's child, sleeping as calmly as if a prison was but another sort of cradle, with one arm round Wasp's neck. The dog turned his glaring eyes

towards the door as it opened, but looked too broken-hearted to bark, merely turning round and licking the child's cheek; and then, with a low moan, curling itself up again, and silently following Cheveley with his eyes, which, in the darkness, looked like large topazes. Near a small table, his elbow leaning on it, and his face shaded by his hand, sat John Lee, while at his feet sat Mary, her face buried in his lap. Neither of them spoke or moved; and Cheveley was so affected by the scene before him, that it was some minutes before he could do so either.

"Lee," said he at length, "this is a grievous business; I sincerely believe you have no right to be here. Tell me how it all happened, and perhaps I may be able to serve you."

The old man raised his head slowly, and said bitterly, "Serve me! yes, as others have served me, and that is well. What more does he want? our lives? he will have them. The same hands he got to steal in order to ruin us, he can get to lie in order to murder us; is not that enough? Must he have usurious thanks upon the insult of proffered services? services from him; no, no! the very devil himself does not give sin such high wages." So saying, he buried his face again in his hands.

"Indeed you mistake," said Cheveley, in even a kinder tone than before; "I come from no one, but merely wish, as a matter of common justice, to see you righted, and help you, if I can."

"Father," said Mary, raising her head and looking imploringly up in his face, "listen to him; he has a kind voice, and perhaps God at last may have sent us a friend."

"Look at me," said Cheveley; "do you not remember me? You once did some work for me—last March, I think it was—at Cheveley."

"Remember you, my lord," cried the old man, rising; "I have not met with so much kindness that I should be likely to forget yours; but it is too good of you to come to such a place as this;" and as he spoke he placed the chair for Cheveley that he had been sitting on; the latter, however, declined it, by seating himself upon the table.

"Oh, sir! my lord! save him! Indeed, indeed, he is innocent; he never took those things!" cried Mary, pas-

sionately flinging herself at Cheveley's feet, who, as he raised her and begged of her to calm herself, said,

"I feel convinced he never did; and it is this conviction that has brought me here, as I want to have a statement of the whole business from yourselves."

The old man then proceeded to give him, almost verbatim, the same account of the officers searching his cottage, and the manner in which he was taken to prison, as Stokes had done; adding, as he concluded,

"And now, so help me God, sir, I know no more how the things came there, nor who placed them there, than you do: and this is as true as death; and yet it must be some one well acquainted with my house that hid them where they were."

"But, in that case, whom do you know that you can suspect bears you such ill will?" asked Cheveley.

"There it is, my lord; the only person who knows every turn about my cottage is one whose regard and fidelity to me I would vouch for with my life; one Madge Brindal, a gipsy girl, whom your lordship may remember brought you to our cottage."

Cheveley did remember, and the conversation he had overheard among the ruins also flashed across him; but then, whatever light he placed that in, it was evident that nothing hostile to the Lees could be gleaned from it. But, again, there was another person besides Madge concerned in it—a man; who or what could he be? And here he became lost in fruitless conjectures as he asked,

"Is there no one else that you can think of? Do no men ever come and see you, and are, consequently, acquainted with the arrangements of your house, and might have placed the things in your desk?"

"None, my lord; at least none that hate me enough to injure me so much; for, except my own sons, John Stokes, and Miles Datchet, the captain of a merchantman, are the only men who have darkened my doors these twelve months past. Oh! no no! it was none of my companions that have done it."

"Who, then, *do* you suspect? for, yourself being guiltless, some one must be guilty."

"Who should I suspect but the villain who first robbed me of what I loved more than my life, my child, my poor Mary; and, having stolen her good name, he now kindly filches mine, that they may go together.

But the reason is plain," continued the old man, vehemently baring his breast and gasping as he spoke: "he thought, forsooth, I'd tell the people what a paragon he was, and prove that those who break all laws are not quite fit to make them. And 'tis better, and fitter, and wiser, that twenty poor wretches like me should rot in a jail, or be branded as felons, than that one fine gentleman, like my Lord de Clifford, should lose an election!"

"Father," said Mary, smoothing down the old man's silver hair, that the wind from the grating was blowing about, "do sit out of the draught; you are so warm you will catch cold."

"Do come farther this way," urged Cheveley, as Lee rocked himself to and fro in his chair, naturally wrought to a great pitch of excitement at the thought of all he had endured and was still likely to endure. "Do come farther this way, for I have a letter for you that a boy gave me at the gate; perhaps it may contain some good news; and you will see to read it better over here; and this basket I was to give to you," added Cheveley, handing it to Mary; "and I was to be sure and say that part of its contents were for the little dog."

"Thank you, my lord," said Mary; "I'm sorry any one should have given you so much trouble; how can we ever thank you for all your goodness to us?"

"By not desponding too much, and recollecting that God never forsakes even when he most tries us; everything proves to us that truth is one of the highest attributes of the Almighty; for, being opposed as it is on all sides, and the semblance of truth so often passing for the reality, through the medium of plausible appearances; yet, so really powerful and unerring is its operation, that, though it may lie hid in darkness for ever so long a time, like the sun under a cloud, it eventually struggles through it and triumphantly proclaims its own glory."

"True, true, my lord, you are right; God bless you for what you say, and forgive me for repining as I do; but mine is a hard, hard lot to bear, and I sometimes think I am too old for heavy burdens now."

"Father," said Mary, brushing the tears away from her eyes, "shall I read that letter for you?"

"Do, child, and tell me what it's about, and who it's from; but it is encroaching upon your lordship's good-

ness to let you remain in this dismal place; it is bad enough for those who are obliged to do so."

"That is neither you nor I," said Cheveley; "so I hope you'll not be very sorry to leave it."

"Ah, my lord," said the old man, shaking his head, "two long months won't see me out of it."

"But a few short minutes may," said Cheveley, "for I have secured tolerable rooms for you in the jailer's house, where you will at least have fresh air and sunshine."

Lee stared at him for a moment as if he did not quite understand him, and then bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Oh, my lord, you are too, too good to us; what can I say to you? nothing; for when the heart is full, words are empty; may God Almighty bless you, and he will."

"One thing you must do for me," said Cheveley. "Don't let the jailer know who I am, or any one that I have been to see you. Now remember, if any trash gets into the papers about it, I shall be seriously angry."

"I would not, for the world, make you so," said the old man; "but it is hard to burst with gratitude and not be allowed to tell it."

"Yes, we may tell it to God, father," sobbed Mary, throwing her arms round his neck, "and he will repay it, though we cannot."

"Come, come," said Cheveley, who felt a choking sensation in his throat, "the jailer will be here presently, and you had better read your letter before he comes, as the boy who brought it is to return for an answer in an hour."

"It is from Madge Brindal, father," said Mary, when she had read it; "and though she is as full of hope as ever, and mysterious assurances that all will go well, yet she says that—that—I cannot name him, pretends there is a large diamond missing out of one of the buttons."

"Does he? ah! well, it's clear there is no stone as yet missing out of his heart," cried he, with a short, husky laugh.

Here the grating of the key in the lock of the door announced Darby's return; who, bowing obsequiously as he entered, and albeit, contrary to his usual custom, leaving the door wide open after him, said, the "'Partments *was* quite ready for *Mister* Lee, and, *'praps* the

gemlen would be so good as to go with him just to see *as* they *was* all *conformable*."

"Remember," whispered Cheveley to the old man, "no more lordships."

"Very well, sir," replied Lee, aloud.

"Now, *miss*," said Davie, "push on, if *you* please; I'll carry the *babby* for you, or any other luggage you may have; that's the best of our lodgings, there's so little trouble in packing up when the tenants *comes* to move out of them: beg your pardon, Mister Lee, I'll *jist* step on with that ere trunk of yours; thank you, sir, that's the time of day."

Mary took her child in one arm and gave the other to her father. Mr. Darby slung the trunk across his left shoulder, and took a bundle in his right hand, while Wasp kept close at his heels, giving them an occasional snap whenever he could spare time from his avocation of looking up at the trunk, which he seemed sadly afraid would evade his *surveillance* by flying away with Davie, or Davie with it; neither of which catastrophes, we are happy to say, took place.

Mrs. Darby had got tea ready; and, although it was a broiling hot day in June, her ideas of comfort being inseparably connected with heat, she had a large yellow-fever-looking plate of hot buttered toast ready also; and, in short, was motherly and affectionate to Mary, and grandmotherly to the child in the extreme, having attempted its life with a green apple before it was in the house five minutes.

Cheveley's only wish now was, that she would *not* attend to the Lees, but leave them to themselves; which having got her to promise, he departed, amid the silent, but fervent blessings of both father and daughter; which, even had they been breathed aloud, could not have drowned the awful imprecations, demoniac laughter, and piteous lamentations that fell upon his ear and curdled his blood as he crossed the court to regain the street.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Tel brille au second rang qui s'éclipse au premiere."

"I do pity unlearned gentlemen on a rainy day."
LORD FALKLAND.

"Moi, voyez-vous, Monsieur l'Essoufflé, je n'ai point de ces intrigues qui font les amis, et les amis qui font applaudir."—*Le Bénéficiare Comédie.*

"Mrs. *Major* Fitzagony's fly coming up;
Mrs. *Colonel* Pilaw's chair; she stays to sup;
Dear! the major's old fat wife has flown in a rage,
And thrown all her cards at the wig of Miss Page;
Mr. Lush, very drunk, enacts King Cambyses,
While his partner's engaged in the mysteries of *Ices*."

IT was the beginning of September, a month sacred to geese, game, and garrulity, inasmuch as people assemble to eat and talk in country-houses; and the Dowager Lady de Clifford's, for a wonder, was full among others; but it was in the very thick of the Triverton election, and at the end of the second day the poll stood thus:

De Clifford	474
Dinely	456
Hobson	312

Gentlemen with sound lungs and a talent for shaking hands are invaluable at an election; consequently, Lord de Clifford had imported Messieurs Fuzboz, Feedwell, and De Rivoli, who had recently arrived in England, and was extremely anxious to see an election; Major Nonplus was also retained as receiver-general, for his lordship knew, by experience, that a great deal of unpopularity is often incurred, in going the rounds, by not being able to consume *all* the stale cake, Cape Madeira, and sausage (!) sandwiches that are set before popular candidates at *all* the houses; here, then, the gallant major was invaluable, for he had that sort of gastronomic vanity that could swallow *anything and everything*, and in the art of kissing children he could not have been excelled by a foundling-hospital nurse. Yet, notwithstanding this legion of coadjutors, Lord de Clif-

ford had a great deal to contend with. In the first place, Triverton swarmed with Dissenters. To be sure, as far as pulling down the established church went, and railing at the clergy, he got on extremely well; but then Lord Albert Dinely had stolen a march upon him by presenting the Anabaptists with a large stone basin, big enough for a donkey to bathe in; and a handsome and extensive tankard to the Muggletonians for their *love-feasts;* this gave Lord Albert a decided 'vantage ground. Next, his mother was by no means too well pleased to have so many people to feed and fawn upon, and it was absolutely necessary to keep her in good-humour. And last, though not least, that very evening there was to be a *dance* at the Tymmons's, to which he and his whole party *must* go, and never once relax in his most assiduous "To solicit the honour of your vote and interest" manner; then the next day came the election dinner, at which a ten years' stock of patience and patriotism would be required. All this was very trying, certainly, but there was a gleam of sunshine through it all—the Lees were safely secured beyond the power of tormenting him. The morning of his second day's canvassing had commenced with a deluge of rain, which continued the whole day; therefore his "aidesdecamp" had been reduced to Fuzboz and Major Nonplus, as Monsieur de Rivoli thought that rain accompanied with fog was exceedingly injurious to the complexion, from the fact of its making people bilious; and Mr. Feedwell declared that going out in the wet always made him feel like a fungus, and that he should not be able to eat a morsel at the dinner the next day, or annihilate the young ladies that evening, if he tampered with himself in the morning; consequently, he and Monsieur de Rivoli remained "tête-à-tête" the whole day, stretched on opposite sofas, each giving the other to understand that it was utterly impossible *he* ever could have made a conquest.

It was about half past five when Lord de Clifford returned, not so well pleased with his second day's canvass as he had been with the first, on account of Lord Albert's increasing popularity with the Dissenters. In any dilemma he was (with a degree of filial affection that was truly amiable) in the habit of consulting his mother's judgment; and, accordingly, though he knew she was not fond of being disturbed when Frump was enacting

the part of the Graces, he repaired to her dressing-room. No sooner had his knock been answered by a permission to come in, than Frump (who, had she been "valet de chambre" even to Napoleon, would have still kept him a hero to her in spite of himself) immediately withdrew.

"Well, my dear, how is the poll? I hear you got on *vaustly* well to-day."

"Pretty well, my dear ma'am; but those d—d Methodists plague me. Dinely has made himself so devilish popular with them. I wish you could strike out something, anything that would seem religious, that we might do. *You* understand these sort of things, my dear ma'am. Do devise something that would tell *permanently* among them."

"'Pon my word, my dear," replied the dowager, assuming a thoughtful attitude by placing the two forefingers of her right hand to her temple under her frizzette, and the other two on her chin, "it's difficult to know what to do; let me see—oh, I'll tell you; suppose I make the servants fast twice a week."

"Now, really, my dear ma'am, that's not a bad idea; but, as I always say, I know no one in point of cleverness to compare to you."

"Very just observation, my dear; and if every one had the sense to think so, the world would go on a great deal better than it does."

"But now," resumed Lord de Clifford, affectionately taking his mother's hand, "I have a *very*, *very* great favour to ask you; a woman of superior understanding like you must know that private feelings should always yield to public good."

"Lord! my dear," interrupted the dowager, who began to fear that her son was going to ask for more money for his election, "you alarm me by such a preamble; can't you come to the *pint* at once? But, however, I think it right to tell you beforehand, if it's anything about politics I'm inexorable; for you know I'm a Tory, as I think every landed proprietor ought to be. And these here Radicals are such lords of the creation, that, let them commit what trespasses they will, there's no warning them off the premises; and Grindall tells me he has more trouble with them than enough. No, no, my dear, I really cannot encourage Radicalism, and the rights of the people, and all that sort of thing, even to

gain you your election; for I always had that sort of independent sperit about me, like my mother, that, when I wanted nothing, I never would put myself out of the way for any one; and I must say I'm very glad to hear that Radical fellow Hobson is the last on the poll."

"What I was going to ask you, my dear ma'am, has nothing on earth to do with politics, but may have a great deal to do with making me popular, or the reverse."

"Oh, my dear, that's quite another affair; what is it?"

"Why, that d—d fellow Hoskins is in London, so we shan't be annoyed by the sight of him; but his wife, old MacScrew that was, is to be at the Tymmons's to-night, and I want you to be civil to her. You know she lent Herbert two thousand pounds last year, though, having got that appointment in Russia, he has not wanted it for his election; but still it would be very impolitic in us to quarrel with her, especially just at this crisis; and as every one knows how infamously Hoskins has behaved to you, your noticing his wife will appear doubly magnanimous; and, indeed, mark more strongly your disapprobation of him, of whom you need never, at any period, take the slightest notice."

"Well, my dear, there is some sense in your last observation; but really I have no patience with the old fool for marrying that fellow."

"Oh, d—n it, I don't know, my dear ma'am; any man is good enough for any woman, always excepting the solitary instance of yourself and my father."

"Certainly, my dear; a woman of sperit, courage, and every feminine virtue, was vaustly thrown away upon him. But you had better go and dress, for we dine at half past six, on account of this here tiresome party at the Tymmons's."

"Then you will be civil to Mrs. Hoskins to-night?"

"Oh, certainly, as far as asking her how she does, and how she came to make such a fool of herself, goes. Be so good, my dear, as to pull that bell as you go by for Frump."

As soon as Frump reappeared, her ladyship completed her toilet, which consisted of a claret-coloured gros de Naples dress, made high up to her throat, over which were arranged three diamond necklaces in succession and two gold chains, fastened in the centre of her bosom by a vinaigrette in the form of an envelope,

with a ruby seal, intended to represent a frank, inscribed as follows:

"Triverton, November fourteen, 180–.
"To the Viscountess Dowager de Clifford,
"Blichingly Park.
"*Herbert Grimstone.*"

And presented to her by that amiable young man as a commemoration of his first return to Parliament! There was a humility that was quite charming about her ladyship's diamonds; for they did not disdain associating with the most homely things, as they proved by a wreath of brilliants going across a very shabby, somewhat tumbled, and not over-clean morning cap, trimmed with the narrowest blonde that is made; while Scotch pebbles and dim gold bracelets jostled very handsome ones. A large pocket-handkerchief of fine but thick cambric, with a hem so narrow that it looked as if Mrs. Noah had employed her ingenuity on it "pour passer le temps" in the ark; and a very small transparent horn fan, with a wreath of roses and forget-me-nots round it, completed her "pareur;" which having done, we will leave the industrious lady to go down to dinner, while we go and take a survey of Mrs. Tymmons's preparations for her party.

In the first place, Mr. Tymmons had ordered *real* Champagne from "the Golden Fleece" at Triverton, and made himself extremely busy about what he called appropriate devices for everything on the supper-table; in the centre of which was a spun sugar effigy of Lord de Clifford being chaired, surmounted by two mottoes, the first of which was "Ducit amor patriæ," done in gold, while immediately under it, in coloured comfits, was inscribed "Sweet's the love that *meets return!*" This Mr. Tymmons thought witty in the extreme, and laughed for an hour at his own brilliancy; but as punning, like every other vice, increases frightfully when once indulged in, he farther proceeded to write on pieces of paper the words "lapsus linguæ," which he placed on every dish of tongue sandwiches; but his chef-d'œuvre consisted in putting a large empty dish in a very conspicuous part of the table, containing another placard, with "Hobson's choice" written on it; and having concluded these elegant arrangements, by impressing upon the waiters that the popping of the Cham-

pagne corks should be distinctly and regularly heard every two minutes, like the Tower guns firing for the birth of an heir-apparent, he retired to his study, to take what he called "a snooze" before the company arrived.

Mrs. Hoskins being on a visit in the house, all bride though she was, thought she ought to make herself useful; and after having manufactured a sort of galvanized white satin pyramid to wear that evening as a headdress, and placed the three black hollyhocks in the front of it, she very kindly offered to make lemonade with cream of tartar, and farther hinted that soap-suds well beat up, it was impossible to tell in appearance from trifle; and as few people eat sweet things, it saved a great deal of expense; but this motion was negatived by Mr. Tymmons, who said it savoured too much of *close shaving* for his taste. Mrs. Tymmons herself had been in a perfect mosaic of *fusses* since seven in the morning, although her new blue satin dress (blue being the De Clifford colour) had arrived quite safely from London, and only three inches too tight across the back and shoulders. And Grimmy had been *so good*, having only spilt an inkstand over *one* sofa, and stuck three pins into an air cushion that had been placed at a cardtable for Mrs. Wrigglechops, the mayor's wife, to sit upon, as she was apt to be unequivocal in her demonstrations of displeasure when everything was not arranged according to her satisfaction.

Those abominations, white cravats, having again come into fashion, and travelled by easy stages down to Blichingly, Mr. Joseph Tymmons had spent the whole morning in essaying what he had so often tried before, to tie the happy knot; and Mr. Rush was equally occupied with experimental philosophy, by calculating how far he might venture to bare his throat without endangering his life.

The young ladies had remained in their bedrooms all day with their hair in paper, and had not gone down to dinner for fear of making their noses red, as "*the officers*" were *all* coming from Triverton; but the worst of it was, more than half of them were married men; but there was one comfort, however, which was, that Miss Isabella knew to a *certainty*, for she had heard *them say so*, that neither Captain Cub nor Major Dragglefar admired any of the *Simmonses*. The candles were at length lit, the ringlets at length uncased, the blue satin dress

at length squeezed together, Mr. Joseph's cravat at length tied, and Mr. Tymmons, just ten minutes before the arrival of the first guest, at length awoke, when he was alarmed by a loud scream underneath his study, which could proceed from no other quarter but the kitchen.

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Tymmons, rushing down stairs, followed by Mrs. T., tucking up the blue satin, while even the young ladies ventured as far as the head of the stairs; "bless my soul! I hope nothing has happened to the white soup or the mulligatawny. Mary, Hannah, Sarah, what is the matter?"

"Alontho! Alontho! what on earth's the matter?" cried Mrs. Tymmons.

"Nothing at all, ma'am," said Alonzo, working himself into a new livery, and shaking the powder, whose first appearance it was in that quarter, out of his hair, "it's only Mr. Rush a trying to kiss the maids."

"And do you call *that* nothing! Alontho?" said Mrs. Symmons, turning up her eyes with horror; "but ladies can't interfere in thuch things. Mither, I hope you'll notice such conduct *uth* it *detherves*."

"Glad the soup's safe, though; certainly, my dear, certainly," added Mr. Tymmons aloud. "Rush, come here, sir; follow me to my study."

"Oh, Rush," sighed Mrs. Tymmons, as her son followed his father into the study, and she walked on to the drawing-room, "who'd have believed you could do anything of the thort!"

"Shut the door, sir," said Mr. Tymmons, placing himself majestically in an armchair; "how comes all this uproar, sir, on a night that your mother has company too?"

Mr. Rush looked at the carpet, and remarked what he had never done before, though he had known it for the last ten years, i. e., that it had blue in it as well as orange and green; but answer he made none.

"How comes it, I say, sir?" reiterated his sire; but he was still silent.

"I'll tell you how it comes," resumed Mr. Tymmons, senior; "it all comes of your being such a confounded ugly dog. When *I* was your age, sir, the maids never screamed when *I* kissed them. You may go now, and kiss your sisters if you please, but never attempt to kiss any one else, as long as you live, until you can do it without sending them into fits."

Mr. Rush had scarcely closed the study door after him before a loud knock was heard at the street door, and Alonzo having been ordered not to move from behind it the whole night, before the knock had well ceased the door was opened, and, according to the most approved fashion of all the country towns, one of the waiters announced

"Mrs. Major Tadpole!" Next followed, "Mrs. Colonel Crumpet."

Then, "the Mayor and Mrs. Wrigglechops, Miss Catfuss, and Miss Priscilla Catfuss."

"Dr. Snackemall."

Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons stood like Gog and Magog, at each side of the door, to receive their guests, while the young ladies sat ranged on a neighbouring sofa in their white muslin frocks, divided by their black-coated brothers like the keys of a piano, and anxiously listening for the dulcet names of Cub and Dragglefar; but, as Miss Seraphina remarked to her sister, they were too genteel (!) to come early. Presently, "Mr., Mrs., and the Miss Simmonses" were announced. The Miss Tymmonses rose, making a face, but greeted them with a most affectionate "how de do, dears?"

Now the eldest Miss Simmons had very fine hair, and, from dressing it low, had got a village "renommée" of being like Grisi, especially as she sang after a manner. On that evening her hair happened to be particularly well arranged; and though Captain Cub did not admire her, he had been once guilty of admiring her hair. This Miss Isabella Tymmons remembered, and, under the plea of settling a hairpin that was visible, nearly pulled it all down. However, malice generally defeats itself, and poor Miss Simmons, not dreaming it had been done on purpose, good-humouredly twisted it up again, even in a more becoming form than it had been before; at the very moment, too, when Major Dragglefar and Captain Cub entered the room! The latter immediately secured Miss Isabella for the first quadrille; but she pathetically lamented that the dancing could not commence till Lord de Clifford and his mother arrived. However, they had not long to wait, for soon after the whole party from Blichingly made their appearance. The dowager and Lord de Clifford first, with their best popularity smile, bowing and shaking hands with every one, and Messieurs Nonplus, Fuzboz, Feedwell, and De

Rivoli bringing up the rear, the latter having been announced as

"Mister Drivler."

"Law! what a pity," remarked Mrs. Major Tadpole to Mrs. Colonel Crumpet, "to wear those beautiful diamonds with that dowdy old cap and morning dress."

"What beautiful diamonds?"

"Why old Lady de Clifford's."

"Ah, so it is; Crumpet has long promised me a diamond sprig, and you may be sure you won't see *me* wear it with such a dress as that."

"No, my dear, but you're always so *fashnable* and dashing in your dress; but if a colonel's lady wasn't, I am sure I don't know who should be."

"Ah, Tadpole, you're a flattering puss; but I thought there was some story about Lady de Clifford's diamonds having been stolen."

"No, it was some studs of his, and the people are in prison for it now; dear me, he's not at all handsome, is he?"

"No, but he looks *fashnable* too. I wonder what on earth Cub sees in Isabella Tymmons to flirt with; it will be a shocking bad match for him, with his connexions; I'll really get Crumpet to speak with him."

"Oh, it's *she* who flirts with him; she won't let him alone."

"*I* really think it will be v-v-v-*very* dishonourable if he does not *propose* for her after all the attention she has paid him. Mrs. Tadpole, how d-d-do you do? I am delighted to meet you again," said Mr. Frederic Feedwell, extending his hand.

"Mr. Feedwell," said the lady, turning round, "of all people in the world, I am surprised at *meeting you* here."

"And I," said Frederic, "am equally surprised at my good f-f-f-fortune in *meeting you* here."

"Oh, *we* are quartered at Triverton," responded Mrs. Tadpole; "but how long is it since you left Brussels?"

"Very shortly after you went," replied Frederic; "for, when you were gone, of course there was n-n-n-*nothing* worth staying for;" and, so saying, he jerked up his two fingers, at the imminent risk of breaking a long willow feather that drooped from Mrs. Wrigglechops's black velvet hat, who gave him a look sufficiently sharp to quarter him for a *salmi*. Here a sort of

court-circle of the natives began to form, round which Lord de Clifford and his mother went bowing, courtesying, smiling, hand-shaking, and making tender inquiries after the healths of people whom they did not care if dead and buried, provided their votes survived them. With regard to the moral and physical progress of the juvenile portion of the community, Lord de Clifford was peculiarly solicitous; and Master Grimstone Tymmons having indefatigably followed him till he had nearly torn one skirt of his coat off, he turned round to his father with a benign smile, and said,

"Tymmons, I'm afraid that dear boy grows thin; he ought not to keep such late hours."

"Very *natrel you* should wish to see everything *plumper* just now, my lord," replied Mr. Tymmons, winking his right eye and laughing immoderately at this villanous pun, in which mirth Lord de Clifford was obliged to join with a "ha! ha! ha! very good indeed; I see you're as witty as ever."

"Feedwell," whispered Lord de Clifford, touching Frederic's arm, "you must go and talk to the Miss Tymmonses; ask them to dance; and remember, they *hate* the Simmonses, but, 'au sage un demi mot.'"

"Who the d-d-deuse are the Simmonses, my dear fellow? do all the people's names rhyme in this part of the world, eh? I'll tell you something by-and-by about that Mrs. Tadpole; I knew her at Brussels; that woman I was talking to just now."

"Well, never mind telling me about any women to-night," said De Clifford, peevishly.

"*Womens* you should say, my dear fellow," replied Frederic, "to rhyme with Simmons and Tymmons, you know; but where are these Simmonses that I am to abuse to the Tymmonses."

"There, those tall, gawky girls in pink; they are Dinelyites, or, as they call them here, *pinks*."

And, so saying, Lord de Clifford took Mr. Frederic Feedwell up to Miss Tymmons, and said, he was most anxious to have the honour of being presented to her. Miss Tymmons hated Miss Simmons so much, that she always began by admiring her.

"Don't you think Miss Simmons very handsome?" inquired Seraphina of Frederic.

"Handsome! the very reverse, I should say; but

then, to be sure, *I* only admire blondes," replied he, looking languidly at Miss Tymmons's pompadour hair.

"She is reckoned *so* like Grisi," persisted that young lady.

"She has a *greasy look*, certainly," retorted Frederic, "but she has by no means a look of *Grisi*."

"You are a sad quiz, I'm afraid, Mr. Feedwell," murmured Seraphina.

"Happy are those to whom it is im-p-p-p-possible to quiz," sighed Frederic, looking marriage-settlements at her.

Miss Seraphina looked down, but to her poetical imagination the chalk laurels and reform flags on the floor were converted into triangular pieces of bride-cake and enamelled cards, bearing the names of "Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Feedwell," tied together with a silver cord.

"Will you do me the honour of dancing the next quadrille?" said Frederic.

"Are your family aware of it?" murmured Seraphina, still in the United Service Club of her own thoughts.

"They are aware that I never dance; but t-t-t-temptation, you know, Miss Simmons?"

"Not quite so unfortunate as to be Miss *Simmons*, either, Mr. Feedwell," retorted the young lady, indignantly.

"Really, when I look at *you*, I forget everything," sighed Frederic, witching his wig a little more over his right eye; "but, for the very short time you are likely to be Miss *Tymmons either*, it does not matter about one's being correct to a T."

No wife of a week's standing could look more fondly-forgiving at her husband after some slight and first offence, than did Miss Seraphina Tymmons at Mr. Frederic Feedwell as he led her to her place in the quadrille. Major Nonplus having duly disturbed every one and everything at the card-tables, and upset two salvers of ices, now sauntered through the room in quest of farther adventures; and perceiving Mrs. Hoskins sitting close to the musicians, where, from her brown merino dress and brown fur tippet, she might, but for the white satin pyramid, herself have passed for a *violoncello*, he walked up and accosted her with,

"Mrs. Hoskins, your most obedient; how is my friend Hoskins? lucky fellow; passed the honeymoon at Birmingham, didn't you? how did you like it, eh?"

"Oh, horrid place, horrid place; we had lodgings over a furshop, and I was distracted with the noise of thumping and hammering all night; and, when I inquired the reason of it, the woman of the house told me that they were pounding catskins into foreign furs."

"Ah, I perceive," said Major Nonplus, taking up the corner of Mrs. Hoskins's tippet, "this *is* a foreign fur."

"What a useless expense these election balls are," said Mrs. Hoskins, "except when they are given *by* the members to the electors, and then they're all very well. So Mr. Herbert Grimstone did not stand after all; very odd his borrowing money for that purpose, *that purpose*, you know, and *not* doing so."

"No, he's got an appointment in Russia; some people slip through the world as if they were oiled, and my friend Herbert is certainly one of them."

Here the dowager came up; and making the bride a courtesy thirty degrees below zero, hoped she was well, and assured her she felt for her being married to such a man, adding, "I trust, my dear madam, you have not given the staff out of your own hand."

"Oh! no, I've taken very good care to tie up my money in my own power; nothing like taking care of the main chance, you know, the *main chance*."

"Very just observation; and such prudence, I'm sure, does great credit to your head and *hort*. I often envy you the way your property is vested, for it is impossible to conceive the trouble we *landed proprietors* have: all *these here* Poor Laws, and Corn Laws, and tithes, are *vaustly* annoying; and when the *landed proprietor* is a female, they are sure to be imposed upon, especially when they are of a liberal, generous *sperit* like myself. I'm sick of seeing the puffs in the paper about the beef, coals, and blankets Lord Sudbury gives to the poor, when, as Grindall says, they are nothing to the rabbits and watergruel that I give; and when there's company in the house, I make it a *pint*, instead of paying the women who weed the gravel walks in the shrubberies, to let them come and eat up the scraps, which they have comfortably sent to them in the toolhouse."

"I'll tell you what makes an excellent soup for the poor," said Mrs. Hoskins; "though your ladyship does everything on such a liberal scale, I dare say you are already aware of it: potato-skins, *well* boiled, with *plenty of water* and a *little* oatmeal; and, if you wish to

make it *very* rich, put, while boiling, a couple of ends of mould candles into it. Oh! it's an *excellent* soup for the *poor*, you know, for the *poor*."

"Did you ever try it on any one?" asked Major Nonplus.

"Oh, dear, yes, a servant I had once; I fed her on nothing else for a month; but she was a poor, sickly creature, and got ill, so I was obliged to send her away; those sort of people never know when they're well off; I dare say she's starving now."

"I should think," said the major, seizing a handful of rout-cakes as they passed, "that *that* was a trade which, if learned at all, would be learned in a month, so perhaps she's doing very well."

Just at this moment Monsieur de Rivoli touched Major Nonplus's elbow, and, taking him to a little distance, said, looking at and round Mrs. Hoskins,

"Ah! quel drolle de chose, my dear fellow; can it be par hazard le costume ancienne D'Angleterre?"

"Hush! she is a bride."

"A bride?"

"Yes."

"Oh ciel! where is de man dat have de mauvais gout to make dat?"

Here the music began playing "The Cachuca," and the people reeling (for it could not be called waltzing) round; the men vehemently see-sawing their partner's arm up and down, as ensurance-men do the handle of a pump on the night of a fire. One young gentleman in particular, whose head wine as well as waltzing had made giddy, fell with his partner, in a horizontal position, at Major Nonplus's and Monsieur de Rivoli's feet, and nearly pushed them into Mrs. Hoskins's lap, who was sitting alone in her loveliness, old Lady de Clifford having left her to do the popular to some one else.

"Pretty tune this, pretty tune," said Mrs. Hoskins, by way of reassuring the gentlemen after their "contretemps." "What is it? What's the name of it?"

"'The Cachuca,'" replied the major.

"The cat what?" interrogated Mrs. Hoskins.

"'Cachuca:' it's a Spanish word."

"Oh, then I'm sure I never shall be able to pronounce it."

"Ha! ha! ha! I know you always find it difficult to bring out the *Spanish*; however, I dare say my friend

Hoskins will make you do it yet," said the major; "but there's nothing like a technical memory. Now I'll put you in the way of remembering the word cachuca: if you were to desire an English cat to eat a French cat, what would you say?"

"Oh dear! shocking! I'm sure I don't know, for I never should think of doing such a thing."

"Well, but suppose you were, what would you say, eh?"

"Oh, but I can't suppose it."

"Well, you give it up, do you? Then I'll tell you: you'd say to the English cat, '*cat-chew-chat-cha*,' you know, cachuca. Ha! ha! ha!"

There is no knowing how much longer Major Nonplus might have laughed at his own inanity, had not the attention of the whole room been called to a violent squabble at the card-table between Mrs. Wrigglechops and Miss Drucilla Catfuss, or, rather, an attack upon poor Miss Drucilla on the part of Mrs. Wrigglechops. The former had lain down her cards, and with all the mildness and amiability that belongs to that epoch of female existence, had announced herself 'vingt-un.'

"You're no such thing, ma'am, and everybody sees and knows that you're not," vociferated Mrs. Wrigglechops, thumping the table with her clinched hands.

"You know, Mrs. Wrigglechops," pianoed Miss Drucilla, even more meekly and mildly than before, "the ace is either one or eleven."

"The ace is either *won* or *lost*, ma'am; so no shuffling, ma'am, if you please, for it won't do here," whizzed Mrs. Wrigglechops; and suddenly turning to her husband, a poor little wizzened man, who sat trembling beside her, and looked like a frostbitten Ripston pippin in a bag wig, that had evidently acquired the habit of standing on end at Mrs. Wrigglechops, and appeared to have serious thoughts of retreating altogether from the head of the wearer; "Wrigglechops," cried she, seizing and shaking his arm, "why, are you dumb? *Can* you sit by and see your wife so insulted? *you*, the head of the corporation, too; why don't you speak?"

But Wrigglechops never being allowed to speak at home, found it difficult to do so abroad; and, after three ineffectual hems, he was still silent.

"Pay the money, then, sir; pay the money, since you *like* to be cheated and *won't* dispute it."

"Ahem, ahem, my dear," whispered the gray *mayor*, who in that family certainly was not the better horse, "I have no money: I asked you twice for some, you know, before we came out, but you wouldn't, I mean you forgot, to give me any, and I have only the sixpence change out of the darning needles I bought you this morning."

Luckily for Mr. Wrigglechops's safe steerage through the *needles*, where he was wellnigh splitting on the rock of his *bigger* half's displeasure, hearing the fracas, Mrs. Tymmons had sent Lord de Clifford to request Mrs. Wrigglechops would favour them with a little music. Now Mrs. Wrigglechops was not a little vain of her science in music, and thought she excelled as much in harmony as every one else acknowledged she did in discord. So, taking Lord de Clifford's arm, she strode away to the piano, where she belaboured that beautiful thing of Hez's, "La Violetta," as though every note had been a husband and every finger a cane. But, as

"Music hath power to sooth the savage breast,"

where was Fuzboz all this time? Why, "man delighted him not, nor woman either;" so he thought law might, and therefore retired into Mr. Tymmons's study, snuffed the candles, stirred the fire, seated himself in *the* armchair, and taking down the first volume of "Burgh's Political Disquisitions," read till he came to the 47th page, and pondered over the following passage:

"Here we see 56 members (about a ninth part of the whole for England) are sent into the House of Commons by 364 votes, which number ought not to send in one member; for no member ought to be elected by fewer than the majority of 800, upon the most moderate calculation, in order to give 410,000 voters their due and equally distributed share of legislative power, without which equal distribution the majority of the men of property are enslaved to the handful of beggars who, by electing the majority of the House of Commons, have so great an overbalance of power over them as to be able to carry every point, in direct opposition to their opinion and to their interest."

"D—d nonsense," muttered Fuzboz; and then he thought of his last political article in the "Investigator," and, naturally enough, fell fast asleep. Now it so happened that Master Grimstone Tymmons was like

the devil, inasmuch as he was never idle; add to which, he inherited all his father's wit; but, at his tender age, it was apt to display itself more in practical jokes than in "bon mots." All the morning he had evinced his party spirit by daubing his nursery-maid's cherry cheeks with a bluebag, telling her that pink was Lord Alber Dinely's colour, and she must not wear it; a white ca and a macaw he had also bagged, and was much charme at his sport.

As the night advanced he grew cross and sleepy, bu would *not* go to bed; and finding there was not sufficient scope for his genius in the crowd of the dancing-room, he suddenly recollected that it was a long time since he had broken the glasses of his father's spectacles, and that he might as well go and do it then, while he thought of it. But we are all the creatures of circumstance, and the firmest resolves often melt, like ice beneath the sun, under its unforeseen influence. So it was with Master Tymmons; from the opening of the door of his father's *sanctum*, a spectacle awaited him that quite drove the spectacles out of his head. There sat Fuzboz, his limbs, as usual, cased in Russia ducks (which, as the Irishwoman said in the gallery of the Dublin Theatre, would have been *all the better for a swim*), his feet stretched out, while on them perched the white cat that Master Grimstone had blued that morning; his head rested on the back of the chair, and his mouth opened wide, emitting most somnolent music. There was a grotesque ugliness in Fuzboz's face that tickled Master Tymmons's fancy exceedingly, and inspired him with the idea that a little blue would be a great relief to so much black. And as, with all geniuses, to plan and to achieve are one, he noiselessly glided out of the room, ran up stairs to his nursery, seized the elective franchise bluebag, plunged it into water, and redescended to the study, where he held it to the fire for a few minutes, lest the shock of the cold water should awaken his victim. These preliminaries over, he proceeded cautiously on tiptoe to convert the small segment of a nose which Fuzboz possessed into a very excellent representation of an Arline plum; and that his cheeks and eyebrows might not feel themselves neglected, he bestowed equal attention upon them. At this stage of the business Fuzboz winced a little, being tickled with the flannel of the bag, and Master Grimstone retreated

for a minute behind his chair, till Somnus had again established his reign, when the youthful Apelles, thinking that blue studs well dropped, and a flowing pattern over the Russia ducks, would considerably improve the whole, again stepped forward, and having achieved his glorious task, stood clapping his hands pantomimically before it, till being unable any longer to suppress his laughter, he left the room. Alas! Fuzboz is not the only one in the world who sleeps soundly, not dreaming how blue they shall look when they awake; and, accordingly, on he slept till the supper went in and the fire went out, and from these combined causes he awoke; for the din that came from the supper room was tremendous, and the cold of the study was intense.

"D—n it," said Fuzboz, rubbing his eyes, which operation shaded off the blue on his cheeks rather unbecomingly, "I've been asleep; I suppose by all this clatter of knives and forks, they are eating in the next room. I'll go and get something to eat too." And, so saying, with another yawn he rose and walked into the supper-room. As Fuzboz entered, Mr. Tymmons, with a Champagne glass in his hand, which he occasionally pirouetted in the air, was in the midst of a *neat and appropriate speech*, in which he was about to give Lord de Clifford's health, and at that very moment conclude with these words: "And now, ladies and gentlemen, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I shall not trespass farther on your time than to propose the health of one whom, even had he never had a seat in Parliament, I am sure would still have had one in every heart present. I mean our worthy member; for our member he *was*, and our member he *will* be again before this time to-morrow, Viscount de Clifford." (Tremendous applause, in which six wine-glasses were broken, and Mrs. Tymmons looked as if she thought she should be so too.) "And remember, ladies and gentlemen," added he, "that the most effectual method we can adopt to make our opponents look *black*, is by every one of us, to a man, looking *blue*." Hear! hear! hear! and great applause, in which Fuzboz joined as he advanced towards the table, where he had no sooner taken his place than every one became convulsed with laughter, except Lord de Clifford, who did not understand; Fuzboz, his jackal, his whipper-in, his boots! his retail Ruganlino! "playing such pranks before high Heaven"

at such a time! Could he mean to throw ridicule on *his* august person? and, if not, who in their turn could have presumed to take such liberties with so great a man as his literary and political scavenger? It was most surprising! most mysterious! and the mystery might have remained unsolved till Doomsday, had not Master Grimstone, proud of the excessive satisfaction his handywork had occasioned, boldly stepped forward, and proclaimed himself the author of it; whereupon he was ordered to bed, and carried thither "vi et armis." Mrs. Wrigglechops thanked God *she* had never had a child. Mrs. Hoskins hoped she never might have one. And Fuzboz declared the young rascal would live to be a Tory! Delightful as *all* parties are, and as this one was in particular, the time must come when people must go, and that time had now arrived. Alonzo was still standing behind the door, where his powder had been blowing about the whole night during the ball; and chaotic was the confusion of cloaks, shawls, caleches, and clogs; while so dense and yellow was the fog, that all the fly's looked like flies in amber as Mrs. Wrigglechops stepped into hers and drove off, telling her husband to be sure and put Mrs. Major Tadpole safe into her chair.

CHAPTER XVII.

"The people of England experience no more aid from their supposed representatives, than if the House of Commons was in form and avowal, what it is in truth and substance, a chamber for registering ministerial edicts."

"The parson he preaches, the doctor he teaches,
And water extinguishes fire!
But elections! they teach us, that dinners and speeches,
Are *all* that the people require;
For as for the Poor Laws, we know they are sure laws,
Making famine as fertile as sloes,
With such excellent Poor Laws, who'd try to cure laws,
Not the Whigs, sir, as all the world knows."

At twelve o'clock on the morning after Mrs. Tymmons's party, the returning officer had declared Lord de Clifford duly elected, and by a quarter past one he

had addressed the free and independent electors of Triverton from the balcony of the "Golden Fleece," in a blue waistcoat and a liberal speech, after which he was chaired up, and down, and round the town, in a very handsome chair, with a pepper-caster top, wreathed with blue ribands and yellow chrysanthimums, while before it walked many hundreds of the hatless and coatless patriots, intoxicated with the spirit of liberty, and bearing flags with the following inscriptions:

"Vote by Ballot."

"Civil and Religious Liberty."

"De Clifford, the man of the people."

"No Corn Laws."

While immediately over the chair waved a banner, containing an inscription of the popular member's own concocting, which ran as follows:

"The strength of a people is vested in themselves;

"Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves;

"And their rights can be protected by *none but themselves*."

These truths, coming as they did from a beautiful blue satin flag, of course elicited loud cheers, with loud cries of "De Clifford for ever!" But it was not till they passed Hobson's hustings, and the band struck up "See, the conquering hero comes," as a delicate attention to the defeated candidate, that Mr. Frederic Feedwell (who formed the fourth in a britschka with Monsieur de Rivoli, Major Nonplus, and Fuzboz) thought sufficient allusion had been made to himself individually to call for any manifestations on his part; but he no sooner heard this inspiring air than he took off his hat, and bowed most graciously to the right and to the left. The Dowager Lady de Clifford followed in a close carriage; the four black horses had blue rosettes; and Frump had taken care to exchange the green veil that usually adorned her ladyship's bonnet for one of sky blue crape, which had a charming effect against the faded lilach of the figured silk.

The chairing was over at four; and as the dinner was to take place at five, Lord de Clifford and his friends had arranged to dine at the "Golden Fleece." Frederic had taken the precaution of eating no breakfast; for how could he have managed a five o'clock dinner if he had? and, as he never travelled two miles from home without Horsdœuvre, he had desired him to superintend

the dressing of all the things for Lord de Clifford's end of the table, and afterward to dress himself, and stand behind his, Mr. Frederic Feedwell's chair, to watch that he did not incontinently venture upon any experiments of native talent. Monsieur de Rivoli having ascertained that the large screen he saw at one end of the dining-room was placed there for the accommodation of the wives and daughters of Lord de Clifford's constituents, that they might be edified by hearing the speeches that swayed their husbands' and brothers' politics, resolved upon a *recherché toilette* on speculation. And Major Nonplus having with great assiduity ferreted out that Mr. Lamb, mine host of the "Golden Fleece," had actually in his cellar six bottles of cote d'or, made interest to get them placed in a basket under the table where he was to sit, fully intending in the course of the evening to relieve guard in that quarter himself.

Fuzboz had his preparations to make too; but they were of a different nature, his Russia ducks being like the laws of the Medes and Persians, inasmuch as they "altered not" for dinner, breakfast, or supper; and as it still wanted three quarters of an hour to the dinner, he sat down and wrote a full account of nearly all that *was to take place* at it for "The Investigator;" he also put a speech into Mr. Wrigglechops's mouth, which the poor man never would, and, what was "more germane to the matter," never *could* make, in which he made him insidiously confound the late with the present Lord Cheveley's politics, and upon that ground denounce the latter as an apostate, anathematizing him with a couplet from Pharsalia:

> "Audax venali comitatur curio linguâ
> Vox quandam populi libertatemque tueri
> Ausus."

Poor Mr. Wrigglechops! he would as soon have thought of swallowing laurel leaves as quoting Latin, seeing he did not know a syllable of it; for having been for many years churchwarden before he was mayor, he was of opinion that the dead should be left to rest in peace; and as for making a speech at all, he would rather have submitted to a beating from his wife any day than have attempted such a thing; for he was used to the one, and, therefore, got over it very well; but Heaven only knows how he would have got through the other; so

that, all skeptic as he was, Fuzboz must have acknowledged in his heart that his making the dumb speak was nothing less than a miracle!

Five o'clock at length arrived, and with it the guests. Lukewarm dishes with tin covers were placed on the table; and those most patriotic of all sounds, the drawing of corks and clatter of knives and forks, were heard.

"You don't know me, sir, do you?" asked a man in a bottle-green coat, gilt buttons, and a long, capsicum-coloured scorbutic face, who was shovelling knifeloads of cod into his mouth, as he sat on one side of Mr. Frederic Feedwell.

Frederic had a mind to be facetious, and therefore replied,

"Yes, you are a *fishmonger*."

"Well, now, so I am; I shouldn't have thought as you'd have remembered me, Tim Sounds, the fishmonger in Hungerford Market. Don't you remember a tiff you and I had once about the price of a turbot, the time as you fought that popgun duel with Muster Jackson? Well, that very day, not knowing whether you'd live to eat it, that French chap as you had for a cook—why, catch me, if that ain't he a stanning behind your chair now! well, he comed down to the market and *h*ordered a turbot, and you said the lobster sauce of it wa*r*n't good, and refused to pay more nor thirty shillings for it; so I was obleged to take the law on you. But at a time like this, sir, when the freedom of *h*our country, *h*and the liberties of *H*englishmen *h*is, I trust, secured by the glo*rus* result of this day's 'lection, I should not call myself a man if I wasn't willing to drown *h*all *h*animosities in the sea of reconciliation! So I shall be *w*ery 'appy to take *v*ine with you, sir, *h*and drink to forget and forgive! that's my way of doing business!"

So saying, Mr. Sounds poured out a glass of cape Madeira, that had assumed the travelling title of sherry, and having given notice of its descent by a loud smack of the lips, again turned to Frederic, and patronizingly inquired whether he should help him to cod.

"Thank you; I ne-ne-ne-never eat cod," said he; "I only take the oyster sauce;" a fact that he clearly demonstrated by conveying the whole contents of a tureen that Horsdœuvre had just brought him into his

own plate, to the great dismay of Mr. Wrigglechops, who sat within two of him, with his fish cooling before him, in anxious expectation of its "old familiar friends," the oysters.

"Come, come, fair play's a jewel, as the fox said to the goose," cried Mr. Sounds, eying the diorama of the rocher de cancale on Frederic's plate. "*Munoply* his the distruction of trade; *hif* hevery one vas to turn themselves hinto hoyster-beds as you do, what would become of the cods? Vy, the sea vould be hover pop'lated; and that would be a pretty business, beyond the power of the government to reg'late."

"Let us hope, Mr. what name may I admire your sound sense by?" parenthesized Frederic.

"You've hit it, sir—Sound. My name is Sounds, sir, *has* I told *ee* before. Jacob Sounds, of No. — Hungerford Market, London; and 45 Westgate-street, Triverton."

"I was going to observe, Mr. Cod Sounds—"

"Jacob, sir, if you please."

"Je-Je-Je-Jacob Sounds, that no doubt, were the marine over-population that you dread to ensue, there would be some ultra-marine Malthus and Martineau found among the whales that would set it all to rights; but with such a member as yours," added Mr. Frederic Feedwell, who never could resist a sneer at his best friends, "earth, air, and water will all be well regulated."

"Why, certainly, he's a thorough-going Reformer, as thinks nothink of his hown interests compared to the people's; for he told us so in his speech to-day."

"And what stronger proof of his integrity can you require?" smiled Frederic. "I'd advise you to make the most of him, for you never can hope to get another like him!"

"I don't say that neither," deprecated Mr. Sounds; "for it's my maxim that there's as good fish in the sea as never vas caught; and reform is a good strong net, as catches hall sorts of hodd fish. So ve'll *ope* for the best."

"*Y a-t-il du gibier?*" whispered Frederic to Hors-dœuvre.

"*Oui, de potence, je croi, monsieur,*" replied that distinguished *artiste*; "for one man at de oder table, when I go just now to ask for some of de *beuf Anglois* dat

have been hanged, for Monsieur le Major Nonplus, he say to me if I was Jaques Ketch: *mais ils sont tous des politiques polisson ici je croi; moi j'aime les politiques au riz; comment appeler-vous cela, au riz, Tory? ah, oui, Tory, c'est ça.*"

"*Tait toi*," said Frederic; "and take these *beignets* to Mr. Fuzboz, that gentleman opposite."

"*Ah, oui, le monsieur avec le nez bémolisé.*"

"Mr. Mayor," said Mr. Chute, the cheesemonger, protruding his chin across the table, "the pleasure of a glass of wine with you?"

"With pleasure, Mr. Chule."

"Your good health, sir."

"The same to you, sir."

"I think I saw your *lady*, Mr. Wrigglechops, on the hustings this morning. Mrs. Churle and my girls *was* just five minutes too late to get a good place; however, they'll hear the speeches to-night."

Mrs. Wrigglechops was also to hear the speeches that night; and it was just possible she might at that very moment be within earshot, behind the screen. So the major replied, in a much louder tone than his usual *consort* pitch:

"Yes, sir, thanks to Mrs. Wrigglechops, no one is ever too late in her house; everything is like clockwork there."

"Very true," chuckled Mr. Tymmons to Mr. Snooks, the shoemaker; "and I'm sure he and she are the clock itself; for when her hand is at *strike*, he's always *silent*. Ha! ha! ha!"

Here the din of voices, and clatter of knives, plates, and glasses, became tremendous, and precluded all conversation but that of a complimentary nature, which, the louder it is uttered, the better.

"What a fine boy that *do* grow of yours at the Blue Coat School," bellowed Mr. Scraggs, the butcher, to Mr. Grain, the glazier.

"*Lawr*, do you think so?" replied Mr. Grain; "his mother and I thinks him quite a ruffian; he eats *tremenjus!*"

"Well, I was thinking," said Scraggs, "*as* you had had more meat since he've been home; but, depend upon it, Grain, it's a *wicious* way of bringing *hup* the rising *gen*ration, not to let 'em *ave* plenty of *wittles*, specially meat; and that's the reason as I don't *prove* of the New Poor-laws."

"Very true," said Mr. Butts, the brewer; "meat and *plenty of beer* is the best thing you can give a child, rely upon it."

"Give them plenty of *beer*," said Mr. Tymmons, "and then I suppose you mean to say nothing will ever *ale* them! he! he! he! he!"

One of those sudden and awful silences that sometimes take place in a crowd now ensued, and betrayed Mr. Tymmons ha! ha! rig, all by himself; "Non nobis domini," was then played, the cloth was removed, the vice-president rose, and, thumping three times distinctly on the table, cried out,

"Gentlemen, charge your glasses."

"That *wee'l be sure* to do," whispered Mr. Lamb, the landlord, to Mr. Brown, the wine-merchant.

"The Queen," was then drank, and the national anthem played; next followed,

"The Duchess of Kent and the royal family." Then came "Lord Melford and her majesty's ministers;" three times three.

But the vice-president begged to propose an amendment, that Lord Melford's health might again be drank by itself.

Unbounded applause.

AIR,

"'Mid pleasures and palaces."

"And now, gentlemen," said Mr. Gullwell, the vice-president, again rising, who, with a white pocket-handkerchief in his right hand, accompanied his periods by occasionally shifting the wine-glasses before him, and changing the position, first of his right foot and then of his left, much after the manner of the late lamented Mr. Matthews, in his inimitable "At homes." "And now, gentlemen, often as it has been my grateful pride to address you, upon no former occasion did I ever feel such pride and such gratitude as I do on the present" (hear! hear! hear!); "for to-night we are met to celebrate, for the fourth time, the return" (for the loyal and independent borough of Triverton) "of a member who, whether we view him in the private life which he endears or the public one which he adorns, alike must command our esteem, our admiration, and our gratitude!" (Hear! hear! hear! and tremendous thumping of the table.) "Gentlemen, we live in times when, as the hero of Trafalgar proclaimed,

"'England expects every man to do his duty;' and when was England ever yet disappointed in such an expectation? The men of Triverton, as the termination of this day's contest can certify, have gloriously *done* theirs, and great is their reward; for all that the country at large demands in its representatives—and therefore, like the Grecian painter who required perfection, have to seek in *many*, they have had the singular good fortune to find in *one*—is it the stern, the incorruptible, the self-sacrificing patriotism of Rome you require? you have it in him. Seek you the living model of that filial virtue which Seneca has so lauded to posterity in a Manlius and a Xenophon, in him you will find it excelled; in short, whether as husband, father, brother, statesman, or friend, virtue wants an all-compromising name, she has but to pronounce that of De Clifford!" (Hear! hear! hear! great table thumping, and several glasses broken.) "Truly may he say of his splendid achievements in the cause of reform,

"'Exegi monumentum ære perennius.'

And now, gentlemen, knowing that it will find an echo in every heart here, I .. ill propose the health of our enlightened and patriotic member, Viscount de Clifford!"

"Viscount de Clifford!

"Hip! hip! hip! hurrah!" (nine times nine.)

When the plaudits had in some measure subsided, Lord de Clifford rose, with all that bashfulness peculiar to hackneyed speakers and girls of fifteen, and spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen,—In once more rising to address you, with Triverton and its inhabitants for my theme, I find I am, for the first time in my life, destitute of words; and yet this should not be, for you are *one and all* in my heart, and out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Hear! hear! hear!) "I will speak, then, but it shall be of that which is and ever shall be most dear to me—*your* interests; I should be unworthy of being *their* depository, were I undeserving of the eulogium my honourable friend the vice-president has this night pronounced upon me; *no*, it is the conviction that I am deserving of *it*, which makes me feel that I am worthy of *you*." (Tremendous applause from Fuzboz, followed in a few minutes by the rest of the guests.) "Need I remind you that I was among the first of your

leaders who, despairing that a corrupt body like a Tory House of Commons should voluntarily reform itself, urged and obtained the interposition of the *people;* for I knew that dispersed and abstract efforts must be unavailing; that in such an enterprise, unity of purpose and combination of exertion could alone ensure success; for I, for one, was never deterred from appealing to the *people* by that miserable commonplace of invective that would brand me as the diffuser of discontents and the provoker of sedition; no, I know too well the nothingness of a jargon that does not even deserve to be dignified with so specious a name as *sophistry*, and felt for it that contempt which a man of common capacity must always feel, and which an honest man will always express." (Hear! hear! hear!) "I, and all the friends of reform were told, that though we knew the limits of our own reforms, we could not prescribe limits to the desire of innovation their success might awaken in the minds of the people; to so threadbare a generality, it was scarcely necessary to oppose another commonplace, that no abuse could be reformed if all institutions are to be inflexibly maintained. Yet it was a provocative to do so, when the friends of reform were continually told to remember that no government could be secure if change were perpetually allowed; nay, this battered objection was issued as a fiat, and for a long time implicitly obeyed by the servile majority.

> "'Tibi summum rerum judicium dii dedere—
> Nobis obsequii gloria relicta est.'"

(Loud cheers from the *gentlemen* at the lower end of the table, who did not understand Latin, and, consequently, did not detect the plagiarism.) "But, happily, that majority was succeeded by a greater and more liberal one; and many who deplored the madness of our temerity in venturing our all in the bark of Reform, as long as it was buffeting the stormy ocean of opposition, are willing enough to hail its success with their cowardly cheers now that the gale of popular feeling and the strong current of public opinion, together with its having been so ably manned, have brought it safely into port; but I would warn you to be cautious of that support, which never would have been offered but that it is no longer wanted. Having achieved this glorious victory, now let us study to maintain it, which can only

be done by giving to the people that high and healthy tone of morals, which places beyond oppression on the one hand and above sedition on the other." (Hear, hear, hear.) "But a people's morals, like their power, must emanate from themselves; it is by cultivating all the finer and holier yarn of humanity that woofs our nature, that *that* nature must be improved. Our homes and hearths are the nurseries of our virtues or our vices. The 'boy is father to the man;' the acorn must be planted before the oak can flourish. Are you children? So am I. Are you fathers? So am I. Are you husbands, and does your existence twine round a dearer self? So does mine." (Audible sobs from behind the screen.) "And it is by all these nearest and dearest ties of our common nature that I appeal to you, that I conjure you, to weed, to prune, and to train the minds of the future men and women that are intrusted to your care. It is not so much by making punishments terrible and vice hideous, that I would deprive them of followers, as by making virtue lovely and justice attainable. I would ask no greater boon than that I might live to see every jail in the kingdom replaced by a garden, and every gibbet exchanged for a gymnasium." (Hear, hear, hear, and an uproar of applause.) "And now, my friends and fellow-townsmen, if I have not thanked you for your kind and zealous support, which I feel the more proud of from the conviction that it was given to the *measures*, and not the *man*, it is because I *cannot*. There has been such a run upon my gratitude, that though it is far, *very far* from a state of bankruptcy, yet it will require time, perhaps my whole life, to repay you the balance of obligation I owe you." (Hear, hear, hear.) "I will not, therefore, trespass farther on your patience than to bid you engrave upon your hearts the inscription I had on my banner this morning, and remember that

"'*The strength of the people is vested in themselves;*

"'*Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves.*'

"One word more. Without detracting from my obligations to you, gentlemen, I feel that I should not have been brought in so handsomely, that is, on such fair grounds, had not your wives and daughters lent me *their* countenance. I therefore must beg leave to propose the health of the ladies of Triverton and its vicinity."

The noble lord then sat down amid uproarious accla-

mations, especially from Mr. Wrigglechops, and great giggling from behind the screen. The ladies' health having been drank, they took the hint; and, not to injure it by sitting up too late, instantly departed; but Mrs. Wrigglechops was so melted by the conjugal pathos of parts of Lord de Clifford's speech, that she sent Mr. Wrigglechops a shilling round by one of the waiters, in case he should like to go home in a fly: and Miss Caroline Chubb was in such a fever of admiration, that she said she should die if she did not get a bit of his lordship's writing.

"For, ma, I don't think he could take it amiss if I *was* to send round and ask him for a frank, after *our* Frank getting him three plumpers."

"Well, s'pose you do, Carry," assented Mrs. Chubb; "but who'll you get the frank directed to?"

"Oh, dear, I never thought of that! but, as I'm going to Margate myself on Monday, I could get it directed to me; and I should find it in the postoffice ready for me when I get there."

"That's a very good thought, Carry, and it will look so genteel besides; for gentlefolks always *has* such loads of letters, that I often think they must hire people to write to them: but you can't send a word of mouth message to his lordship—it wouldn't be *purlite*; but just write him a bit of a note—stop, let Betsy do it; she's used to making out the bills, and writes a better hand."

Accordingly, Betsy went into a small room, where the *ladies* were putting on their clogs and cloaks, and called for a sheet of paper; when, from the force of habit, she began,

"Viscount de Clifford debtor to T. Chubb."

"Dear me, don't be so stupid, Betsy," said Miss Caroline; "I'll tell you what to say;" and accordingly, she dictated the following billet:

"Miss C. Chubb presents her respectful compliments to the Right Hon. Viscount de Clifford, M.P. for Triverton; and having the greatest possible wish for his lordship's *cenotaph*, should be greatly *obliged* by his *obliging* her with it in the form of a frank, directed to

'Miss Caroline Chubb, junior.'

Miss C. Chubb having a maiden aunt of that name, eighty-two years of age, sister to her father, living at

Ferrybridge in Yorkshire, will thank his lordship to put the junior, to prevent mistakes.

'Postoffice,
'Margate,
'Isle of Thanet,
'Kent.

'To be left till called for.'

"Golden Fleece Hotel, Friday night,
September the 10th, 18—.

"P.S. Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, begs to apologize to his lordship for making the above demand, and hopes his lordship won't think of settling and giving the frank unless *quite* convenient."

"That will do uncommon well," said Mrs. Chubb, spelling over the note; "but what is a cenotaph, Carry?"

"Laur, ma, I thought every one knew what a cenotaph was: why, a cenotaph is one's own writing written by another person, to be sure."

"You must remember, Carry," said Mrs. Chubb, "that it isn't every one that has had the schooling and *genteel* education as you've had. I'm sure I thought, when his lordship was telling us to attend to our children, well! that may be a slap at *some*, but not at *me:* but wasn't it a *helegant* speech, ma'am?" inquired Mrs. Chubb of Mrs. Wrigglechops, who was pinning up her gown and tucking up a white dimity petticoat beyond the fear of mud.

"Yes, *that's* something like a husband! did you mind how he spoke of his wife! Tell Chubb, will you, to send me the best Stilton he has to-morrow; and two pounds of the poorest Chedder he's got, for Wrigglechops: I'm obliged to keep him low; good things don't agree with him, he's such a poor creature."

"Thank you, ma'am, I'll be sure to attend to it; but do you ever give the major (you'll excuse me, ma'am) a new-laid egg beat up in brandy? It's an excellent thing for people who are rather weak."

"Oh, all the beating up in the world don't do *him* any good."

Here the waiter returned with the frank, and a note from Lord de Clifford, begging Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, would at all times command his services; and assuring her that he never should be guilty of the bad taste of mistaking her maiden aunt of eighty-two for the

blooming Miss Caroline Chubb of eighteen, although he might not have the good fortune to be near either of them as Margate was to Ferrybridge.

After the departure of the *ladies*, the *gentlemen*, as is their wont, became happy and unrestrained: Lord de Clifford and his guests retired at midnight, all, except Major Nonplus, who had knocked under long before that hour; nor was he a solitary instance, as most of the patriotic assemblage were far from being "neat *as imported*." No speeches of any importance had been made after the screen had become untenanted, for Lady de Clifford's health was the only toast given, to which Lord de Clifford briefly replied, as follows:

"Gentlemen, in the toast you have just done me the honour of drinking, you have awakened feelings of so home and personal a nature, that it would be egotism were I to say more than that *I thank you from the bottom of my heart.*"

Here Lord de Clifford pressed both his hands to his breast, and hid his face by bowing down to the table, amid the deafening plaudits of a sympathizing audience. So loud and long-continued were the shouts of pure patriotism and universal philanthropy, that, as the wall of their rooms also formed that of the banqueting-room of the Golden Fleece, it was four in the morning before Mary Lee and her father could get any sleep, as they lay on their narrow beds in the jailer's house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Publicity is the soul of justice."—JEREMY BENTHAM.

"Injuries we may and do forgive; but insults so debase the mind below its own level, that nothing but revenge can satisfy it."—JUNIUS.

"But time winds up his dread account at last!
Then unsway'd justice, fate's stern gauger, comes,
Testing th' unlawful measures of our life,
And into the light and wanting balance throws
The dire portentous record of our doom!"
Unpublished Play.

"The law's an ass."—MR. BUMBLE.

IT was about a week after Lord de Clifford's election dinner that the day was fixed for the trial of the Lees. Cheveley had constantly been to see them, but could gleam no good tidings as to any tangible evidence in their favour beyond Madge Brindal's vague and mysterious prophecies, of which even Mary herself was beginning to weary. Both he and his daughter had passed a sleepless night; and when the day of their doom dawned, even the feeling of conscious innocence that had hitherto supported them seemed to desert them at the idea of the terrible ordeal they had to undergo.

"If I get clear out of that accursed court," said the old man, as he placed his spectacles and the packet of Lord de Clifford's letters in the side-pocket of his coat, "I'll go to America; there are no lords there."

"It will be time enough to talk of going to America," replied Madge, who had taken great pains in dressing Mary in a new black dress, and was now busily arranging her bright golden hair down her faded but still beautiful face, "when you have seen the real culprits in this business well exposed and properly punished."

"And what chance is there of that, Madge? Am I not a poor and an injured man?"

Here a knock came to the door. "Come in," said Lee; and Mrs. Darby entered, with her apron to her eyes, to hide the tears she did not shed, as she announced that the "two *pleese*men were below to show Mr. Lee the way to the courthouse."

"I am ready," said the old man, calmly.

"And so am I," said Mary, in a still more assured voice. "Good-by, darling," added she, stooping to kiss her child, who was sitting on the floor, placing a row of wooden cups and saucers round Wasp, who was patiently sitting within the magic circle, pricking up his ears, and turning his head alternately to and from Madge, his master, and Mary, as they each spoke or moved.

"Me'll do with oo," cried the child, starting up, and letting all his playthings fall, as he held out his little arms to his mother.

"No," said Mary, seizing him in her arms and bursting into tears; "they may drag me to a court of justice, if they like, and I may drag my poor father there, but they never shall drag *you* there if your mother can help it!"

"Mary! Mary! is this your firmness?" said the old man. "I thought you were to be an example to me, and that I was not to see a tear, all woman as you are."

"You shall not see another," said Mary, gently putting down the child, and telling him that he must remain with Madge. "Now I am ready to go."

It was a fine, fresh autumnal morning, with a bright sun. The judges and barristers had all breakfasted. Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase had been retained for the plaintiff, who had also had his solicitor, Mr. Helper, down from London. The case was to be tried before Judge Lively, a brother of Lord Shuffleton's; to whom Lord de Clifford had kindly intimated that he hoped he would make the sentence on those poor people as lenient as possible, on account of the poor girl, whom he understood was deranged. Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase had made himself so agreeable at breakfast, with anecdotes of the witnesses he had badgered and the juries he had bamboozled, the innocent people he had inculpated and the guilty ones he had exculpated, that every one felt sorry when business obliged them to separate.

The court was crowded to excess. Cheveley had mingled with the crowd; and the first persons Mary and her father saw were John Stokes and his wife, the latter sobbing so violently that she was ordered out of court, which had a wonderful effect in subduing her agitation. The din within was now drowned by the clamour from without. It was the cheers of the people as Lord de Clifford alighted from his carriage. Shortly after his arrival the prisoners were placed at the bar.

The old man held his daughter's hand. She trembled violently, and never raised her eyes; but he looked calmly, almost triumphantly round. A murmur of compassion ran through the court.

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase rose; and gracefully lifting up his gown by placing his left hand behind his back, while his right, *pro tempore*, rested in his bosom, opened the case for the plaintiff in an eloquent speech, wherein he implored the jury to remember, that although his client had, with his usual benevolent magnanimity, wished (had it been in his power) on the present occasion to have prevented the law taking its course, and, not being able to do so, was anxious that it should be mitigated as much as possible, "Yet, my lord and gentlemen of the jury," continued he, raising the clinched hand of his right arm above his head, and courtesying nearly to the ground as he let it fall again with an electric thump upon the desk, "*this* is an additional reason why *you* should be doubly guarded how you let aggressing vice triumph through the forbearing clemency of injured virtue! You are not, perhaps, aware, and therefore it becomes my duty to inform you, that the heinous offence of which the prisoner or prisoners at the bar stand charged was, according to our ancient Saxon law, nominally punished with death if the thing stolen was above the value of twelvepence; but the criminal was allowed to redeem his life by a pecuniary ransom: but in the ninth of Henry the First this power of redemption was taken away, and all persons guilty of larceny above the value of twelvepence were directed to be hanged, which law continued in force for a long time; and though, according to the stat. fourth of George the First, the inferior species of theft or petit larceny is only punished by imprisonment or whipping in common law, yet it may be punished by transportation for seven years. It has also been held, that if two persons steal goods to the amount of thirteen pence, it is *grand larceny* in both; and if one, at different times, steals divers parcels of goods from the same person, which together exceed the value of twelvepence, they *may* be put together in one endictment, and the offender found guilty of grand larceny. But this is very seldom done; the clemency of juries will often make them bring in larceny to be under twelvepence, when it is really of much greater value. But this, though evidently justifiable and proper

when it only reduces the present nominal value of money to the ancient standard, is otherwise a kind of pious perjury; and it is now settled that the value of the property stolen must not only be in the whole of such an amount as the law requires to constitute a capital offence, but the stealing must be to that amount at one and the same particular time."

The learned gentleman having now sufficiently appealed to the understandings of the jury by completely puzzling them out of their wits, next began to appeal to their feelings.

"Here then, gentlemen, is the offence not only clearly established, since the value of the property stolen is between two and three hundred pounds. But what will you say when I tell you that the crime was aggravated by the basest, the blackest, the most unaccountable ingratitude? I would fain spare you so revolting a detail; but justice commands, and I must obey. What will you think, I say, gentlemen of the jury, when I tell you that the plaintiff was the prisoners' patron, benefactor, I may say *friend*; for, superior to the accidental distinctions of birth, *he* is the friend of all mankind. It is only one little year since my noble client, hearing that the defendant's daughter was about to be married, united with his amiable and exemplary mother in bestowing on her a more than adequate dower. This will appear the more magnanimous when I inform you that the unfortunate young woman had been for some time labouring under an aberration of intellect, owing to desertion of an unprincipled seducer in her own walk of life; and that her insanity took the turn of imagining the plaintiff to be her betrayer; a supposition carrying absurdity on the face of it, from the fact of the plaintiff's never having resided at Blichingly till a very short time previous to his going abroad three years ago. Nevertheless, the elder prisoner, without the excuse of his daughter's madness, affects to believe her statement, and repays the most generous patronage and protection by heaping insults of every description upon my noble client and his illustrious mother."

Here Lord de Clifford, observing the look of fixed contempt and defiance on Lee's face, and that his counsel was taking notes, became very fidgety, and tried to catch Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase's eye, to make him un-

derstand that he need not dwell any longer on that part of the subject.

"But, my lord and gentlemen of the jury," resumed the learned gentleman, "the plaintiff's mercy was indeed of 'an unstrained quality,' for his object was still to return good for evil; and it was only the very day after his last arrival in the county that he ordered the prisoner to be sent for to Blichingly Park, the residence of his illustrious mother, in order that he might be impartially employed with other tradesmen. And what was the result? I blush with indignation while I relate it! The grossest insolence on the part of the prisoner to the Dowager Lady de Clifford's steward; and the abstraction of two valuable diamond studs, the property of her son, value, as the account furnished by Messieurs Stow and Mortimer can testify, three hundred and sixty guineas, besides a gold watch of her ladyship's. To the last the prisoner was hardened and daring in the extreme; for, would you believe it, my lord and gentlemen of the jury, that when the ministers of justice entered his house to search it, he affected to deliver all his keys into their custody with the greatest alacrity. But, mark the sequel! the stolen goods were found in the secret drawer of the prisoner's own private desk! and, on being restored to their lawful possessor, a large brilliant was missing from the centre of one of the studs. To what purpose the absent jewel was converted, you will be at no loss to decide when I tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that, during the prisoner's and his daughetr's stay in the county jail, instead of the bare cell befitting their crime and their fortunes, they were the tenants of luxurious apartments and the consumers of delicate viands in the jailer's house. And was it to the compassion, the humanity, the disinterested benevolence of Mr. Davie Darby, the turnkey, or to the milk of human kindness flowing in the bosom of the amiable Mrs. Darby, that the carpenter and his daughter were indebted for these refinements in their *seclusion?* No, gentlemen of the jury, it was to the four guineas a week which they paid, and which I can prove that they paid, to Mr. Davie Darby, that they owed it all. Let me, then, conjure you to be cautious how you allow yourselves to be biased by the *apparent* respectability of age or the *should be* innocence of youth. Just as men

in general should be just before they are generous, so should a British jury be just before they are merciful."

And with this sublime maxim and beautiful peroration, down sat Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, and up rose Mr. Sergeant Carrington for the defendant. But, as he had only plain truth on his side, his speech is not worth recording.

The first witness examined was George Newman, hostler at the De Clifford Arms, by Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase.

"What took you to Blichingly Park on Tuesday, the 24th of June last, at or about two o'clock in the afternoon?"

Witness. "My feet." (Laughter.)

"Silence in the court."

"No insolence, sir, if you please," resumed Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "What business took you there?"

Witness, scratching his head. "Whoz measter's business."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "I did not ask you *whose* business, but what business; on what account did you go there?"

Witness. "On count of the bloind mare."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Whom did you go to see?"

Witness. "To see to get the bloind mare out to grass."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Whom did you speak to?"

Witness. "Master Grindall."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "What did he say?"

Witness. "As I was a fool." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Why did he say you were a fool?"

Witness. "Cause I talked of the old lady's having compassion on the poor, and turning out measter's cattle for less than the gentlefolks."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Did you see the prisoner at the bar on that day?"

Witness. "No, cause I never seed the bar at all afore to-day." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Did you see John Lee, the carpenter?"

Witness. "Yeze."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "Where was he?"

Witness. "In Master Grindall's room."

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "What was he doing?"

Witness. "Nothing."

Cross-examined by Mr. Sergeant Bungle.

"What was he saying?"

Witness. "The truth."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "What about?"

Witness. "About Muster Grindall and his mi:

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "What did he say of th

Witness. "That they was a couple of reglar old rascals." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "When John Lee left Mr. Grindall's room, where did he go to?"

Witness. "Home."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "How do you know?"

Witness. "Cause I went with him."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "Now, recollect yourself; you are quite certain that Lee did not go up the stairs facing the audit-room—Mr. Grindall's room?"

Witness. "Quite certain."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "Why are you certain?"

Witness. "Cause he could not go home and go up those stairs at the same time."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "Why could not he?"

Witness, brushing his hat with his elbow. "Whoy, cause it's only lawyers as can do two contrary things against natur at the same time." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle. "You may retire."

Nancy Stokes, the landlady of the De Clifford Arms, was next examined, and deposed, That she was drinking tea with John and Mary Lee, at about six o'clock on the evening of the twenty-fourth of June last, when Thomas Grindall, the Dowager Lady de Clifford's steward, and two policemen, entered Lee's cottage with a search warrant. Lee did not seem surprised at their coming, knowing that all the other houses in the village had been searched, and gave the officers his keys before they asked for them; but seemed perfectly thunderstruck when the diamonds and watch were found in his desk. Witness had known the prisoner many years, and believed him to be a very sober, respectable, and perfectly honest man. Witness thought there was no diamond missing out of the buttons when they were found; could not swear that there was not.

Charles Grant, of the F division, and Joseph Trowbridge, of the G division, were next examined, and corroborated the last witness's statement as to their search

of the prisoner's house on the twenty-fourth of June, and his quiet and proper conduct on that occasion.

Several witnesses were also called, who spoke to the prisoner's general good character.

Davie Darby, the turnkey of the Triverton jail, was next examined, and deposed, That for the last two months the prisoner and his daughter had lodged with him and his wife; that they had been quiet and orderly in every respect. That one Sunday, the fifth day after they had been in prison, a gentleman had called to see them; had taken the apartments in Darby's house for them; and paid the first month's rent in advance. Did not know the gentleman's name, or where he lived. He often called. The four guineas a week which he paid was not for the lodging, but for the board and lodging.

The prisoner at the bar, having pleaded "Not Guilty," was next examined.

"Did not pay the four guineas a week for the lodgings himself; had not so much in the world as that; the money had been paid by a gentleman."

"What gentleman?"

The prisoner was not at liberty to say.

A voice from the crowd, "You are."

Prisoner. "Then I gratefully name the Marquis of Cheveley."

"What proof can you give that you are speaking the truth?"

"*My* word, which I suppose will suffice," said Cheveley, stepping forward for a moment, and giving the crier his card to hand to the judge.

Lord de Clifford turned for a moment and gazed fearfully upon Cheveley. A presentiment came over him that his presence boded him no good.

Cheveley having been recognised, his part of the evidence was deemed conclusive, and the trial proceeded.

Mr. Sergeant Carrington again addressed the jury for the prisoner, detailing the whole of poor Mary's history in a speech that was eloquent from its subject and forcible from its truth. He then produced all Lord de Clifford's letters, whether bearing his own signature or that of William Dale; and compared, analyzed, and animadverted upon all and each of them. A great reaction appeared to have taken place in the feelings of the court. The people looked at Lord de Clifford and

groaned, and then at the old man and his pale, statue-like daughter, who had never once raised her eyes, and wept. But Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase again rose on behalf of his client, and burst into a perfect hurricane of oratory. He affected to treat the whole business of the letters with sovereign contempt; said they were quite irrelevant to the cause for which the jury had been empannelled; and that he must beg of those gentlemen to come to a decision without farther loss of time, as every possible advantage had been given to the prisoner at the bar, both as to a fair and impartial examination of his cause, and a strict and liberal examination of witnesses on his side; that no clew whatever had been gained towards the slightest exculpation of him or his daughter; that the *facts* remained precisely as they were, namely, that property to a considerable amount had been stolen from his client, which property had not only been found in the possession, but in the most secret possession of the prisoner. "Now really, gentlemen of the jury," concluded Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, "you can have no hesitation in giving your verdict for the plaintiff, with such strong circumstantial evidence against the prisoner, and not a single *proof* that can be adduced in his favour."

"Plenty! plenty!" cried a voice proceeding from one of two men that were forcing their way through the crowd towards the witness box. The speaker was Miles Datchet; the other Dorio, Lord de Clifford's valet. The latter turned deadly pale when he beheld them, and perfectly mad between rage and fear; betraying himself by gasping out, as he pointed to Datchet, "Secure that man; he is an impostor, a liar. I gave him money to go to Spain."

"Hush! you had better sit down, my lord," said Mr. Tymmons. "All will be well."

But Lord de Clifford knew that all would not be well; and, while he had yet strength, he hurried from the court to prepare a last struggle for the newspapers; determined to leave England that night, to prevent the law taking its course at the suit of a beggar, whom a minute before he thought he had within his grasp, and was about to crush for ever!

Captain Datchet first of all stated, that, as far back as last February, Lord de Clifford had consulted him upon the feasibility of getting the Lees imprisoned during his

election, and eventually transported. That at first he (Datchet) had recoiled with horror from so black a scheme; but, in order to unmask Lord de Clifford and ultimately redress the Lees, he had feigned an assent to it. That, at first, all his communications with Lord de Clifford had been personal; but that, recollecting this would preclude the possibility of bringing any proof against him hereafter, he suddenly affected to misunderstand some of his wishes, and wrote to him from the country; which letter Lord de Clifford answered, giving him full instructions how to proceed; not indeed signing his name, but his handwriting was too well known to be disputed. He next wrote to him begging he would give him three hundred guineas, and not pounds, to proceed to Spain; which was the stipulation, when all things should be accomplished. To this Lord de Clifford agreed, sending him a draught for that amount, which he then produced in court, as well as Lord de Clifford's letter, bidding him remember that he was not to return to England under two years.

"When we had decided upon what the things were that were to be conveyed into Lee's possession," continued Datchet, "my next difficulty was how to get them there; for there was but one person sufficiently well acquainted with his house to know where to hide them, as if they had been hidden there by him; and this person, I knew, was too sincerely his friend to be brought into the scheme without great management. At length, however, I succeeded in convincing her that my only object was to expose Lord de Clifford and serve the Lees; and she consented. But her promise was given among the ruins of the old abbey above Cheveley Place; and just as she had agreed to everything, I was startled at hearing footsteps outside the aisle in which we were talking; and fearing lest we might be overheard, I suddenly broke from my companion and hurried down the glen; but she afterward informed me that the stranger who was walking there we had no cause to fear would betray us, even had he overheard us." (This part of Miles Datchet's statement Cheveley knew to be perfectly true.) "Well, this was last March, and everything was to lie over till June. And when Lord de Clifford came down to Blichingly, I suggested that Lee should be sent for to do some work; knowing that he would be incensed at being sent for, and would just go

down, as the event proved, to the Park, to vent his indignation. Dorio, Lord de Clifford's valet (as he is here to testify), was desired by his master that morning to give me the watch and the diamonds, which I was to give to the person who was to place them in Lee's desk."

Madge Brindal was called into court and swore to the facts. Lord de Clifford's handwriting was also sworn to by several respectable witnesses, Cheveley having left the court, with a feeling of sickening horror, to avoid being one of them.

Poor Lee was triumphantly acquitted; but Mary had fainted, and it was not till she found herself in the air, with all her former companions that so long had shunned her crying over her, and showering down professions of affection and proffers of service, that she came to herself; and then everything seemed like a painful and confused dream. "Where am I?" said Mary, looking wildly about her.

"With those who love and esteem you more than ever, dear Mary," said several young girls, pressing around her. At length she began to understand that all she saw and heard was real, and she burst into the first flood of happy tears that she had shed for years. Miles Datchet and Madge Brindal, knowing how the trial must terminate, had prepared a banquet among the ruins, to which the whole village were now invited, and which invitation they joyfully accepted.

"Willy is quite safe and well," whispered Madge to Mary; "but he might get cold, and so I thought it better not to bring him."

Mary felt the delicacy of feeling that had prompted this arrangement on the part of Madge; and as she pressed her hand, said, "Always kind and considerate, Madge, thinking of and for everybody."

Mrs. Stokes had sent her husband up to the inn for a carriage and four, declaring that she would have the Lees made as much of, for that one day at least, as any "*rubbishing* member among them." And while the crowd were still standing in groups in the market-place, up drove John Stokes, looking more like a lord (in his own opinion) than a landlord, as he jumped out and placed Lee, Mary, Madge, and Mrs. Stokes in the carriage, while he himself ascended the box and desired the postillions to drive on to the ruins at Cheveley; but the people insisted upon taking the horses off and draw-

ing Lee through the town; in vain he remonstrated; all he said was drowned by their vociferous cheers, which were rather more genuine than those which were wont to echo round the purlieus of the "Golden Fleece."

The day, as we before stated, was beautifully fine over head, and, as it advanced, became quite warm from the sun. Datchet had superintended all the arrangements at the ruins, and had erected temporary arbours of evergreens, which, combining with the natural beauties of the place, made the whole appear like a scene in Boccaccio; and there *is* a magic in fresh air, sunshine, and happy faces, that won't let people be miserable if they are ever so well inclined; even Mary felt as she used to feel, and did not go beyond the present, where all were laughing, talking, and rejoicing, till the shades of evening closed in, when Datchet, who was master of the revels, would not allow them to separate, but had large fires of underwood lit in every direction, and the old abbey itself illuminated with torches, so that at a little distance it looked as though it were on fire. After these arrangements he set all the young people to dance, having provided music for the occasion, while the elder ones sat conversing in groups about the events of the day, and urging Lee to lose no time in prosecuting Lord de Clifford, which was a work of supererogation, as he had resolved not to let another day pass without doing so.

"Hush!" said Mary, suddenly, "what was that noise?"

"Nothing," replied Datchet, "but the tramping of horses' feet."

"The tramping of horses' feet!" echoed Madge; "it's more than that; listen again."

They did listen, and distinctly heard low moans, as it from a person in extreme pain.

"The sound comes from the glen," said Lee.

"No, from the road," said Madge, again listening.

"From the road, certainly," said half a dozen voices.

"Some accident has happened," said Lee; "we had better go and see if we can be of any use." So saying, they armed themselves with torches and repaired to the road, followed by the women, all except Mary, who, with a vague dread that some harm would happen to her father, kept by his side. When they reached the road they could see nothing, but heard the sound of a horse's hoofs galloping furiously away.

"It must be in the lower road," said Datchet, "if any-

thing has happened. Hush! Listen! there, I heard groans again. Some one has been thrown from his horse. Whoever ti is, I wonder he should have come this upper road on so dark a night, the precipice is so dangerous; and I shouldn't wonder if horse and rider, and all, had gone down it. Here, Freddy, go on before, as you take up the least room, and light us down the winding path."

Accordingly, they all descended as quickly as safety would permit, and walked on for about a hundred yards, where they found a man weltering in his blood, with his scull frightfully fractured, and his leg broken and entangled in a stirrup. "Take care," said Mary, "we are walking in his blood."

"Poor creature! I wonder who it is?" said Lee. "Lend a light here, will you, captain?" and, taking the torch out of Datchet's hand, Lee stooped down and removed the gravel and brambles from the face of the dead man, and at the spectacle that awaited him the old man gasped as though he himself were dying; the forehead and one eye was completely smashed into the head; but all that remained was what had been—Lord de Clifford.

"Ma—Mary," said he, in a hollow, low, but awfully distinct voice, extending his hand to draw his daughter to the spot, without removing his eyes from the body, "Mary, *look here!*"

Mary did look, gave one shriek, and sunk senseless into the arms of Madge, who caught her as she fell.

"He is gone. My enemy is gone!" continued the old man, in the same low, hollow, whistling voice, still gazing on the corpse. "He has evaded me, and left nothing but this insolvent flesh to wipe out his great score! But I will be honest; it is none of mine, thank God! They shall have it to whom it belongs. Stand off," cried he, turning to the crowd; "don't you see, fine work to carry home; look to Mary, there, and some one bring a plank from the ruins."

There was a breathless stillness around, and Miles Datchet and Stokes reascended the winding path to obey Lee's command. As soon as they returned with the plank, the body was placed upon it, and Lee ordered four men to carry it. "Here's a rare funeral," said he; "not a single tear, and I chief mourner! Forward, to Blichingly!" cried he, as if giving the word of command; and waving his stick like a sword, as the torch-

light glanced upon his pale and fearful face, none dared to disobey, but moved slowly on, all except Madge and Datchet, who remained with Mary, to try and get her home. Not a word was uttered by any of the procession as they moved along till they arrived at the Park lodge, when the woman came to the gate; seeing such a crowd with torches in their hands, she refused to let them enter, till Lee ordered the men to lower the body, that she might see who it was; and then turning to her, said, in a loud voice,

"Open, I say; none but the gates of Heaven can refuse to do so to the Lord de Clifford!"

"The Lord preserve us!" said the woman, shading her eyes with her hand to shut out the horrible sight as she opened the gates to let them pass.

"Amen!" responded Lee; and again they proceeded for two miles through the Park in perfect silence, till, coming before the hall door, he cried, "Halt!" and having himself pulled the deep-toned bell, which was quickly answered, the servants thinking it was Lord de Clifford returned, and they thought rightly.

"Stand back, all of you," said Lee, "out of sight; behind that buttress a little way. Tell your mistress *I* want her," said he to the servant who opened the door.

"Why, Mister Lee!" said the footman, "I am glad to see *you* at liberty again, but I am sorry to say that *I aint* at liberty to deliver your message, for the old lady is busy a settling accounts with Mr. Grindall."

"Tell her," said Lee, "that I have a longer account for her to settle."

"Why, how much do you take my place to be worth? Nothing, perhaps. Well, that *is* about the *valley* of it, so I don't care if I do have a shy at her with your message. She can but call me '*sirrah*' and turn me away, and the comfort of living with her is, that it's *unpossible* to go farther and fare worse."

The man then walked lazily away, his footsteps echoing through the great hall till he turned into a narrow passage off it and stopped before the door of a small room in which the old lady always sat. Opposite the door was a modern French rosewood bureau, on the top of which stood a small eight-day mahogany clock with brass mouldings; a few modern rosewood chairs, with brown Holland covers, were ranged round the wall on the bare floor, in the centre of which was spread a

small piece of Scotch carpet, and on it stood a small oval mahogany table, very black and highly polished, at which she sat, opposite to Mr. Grindall, with a Pelion upon Ossa of files, papers, and legers between them.

"Is Lord de Clifford come back?" said she, turning sharply round as the servant opened the door.

"No, my lady, it's Lee, the carpenter, as says he has a long account for you to settle."

"What insolence. Mr. Grindall, be so good—" but here she grew deadly pale and agitated. "How, can the trial have ended by *his* being here? Go ask, see."

"Compose yourself, my lady, and I will settle everything," said Grindall, rising. "But does your ladyship owe him anything?"

"Not a farthing, not a farthing!"

"Oh, then it's a clear case," said Mr. Grindall, reseating himself, with a contemptuous smile. "James, tell the old rascal to leave the house instantly."

"Or Mr. Grindall will warn him off the premises."

"And that her ladyship owes him nothing."

"Dear, though, it's very strange that De Clifford is not back, yet it's nearly nine o'clock."

"Oh, it's most likely his lordship remained to dine with the judges; for, when I left the court, everything was going on as smooth as possible, and Sergeant Puzzlecase was winding up his concluding address to the jury."

"Oh, well, perhaps so." Here James returned.

"Please you, my lady, Lee says as it's something he owes you."

"That he owes me? Well, let him come in, as Mr. Grindall is here."

"He says he won't, my lady, for he's took an oath that he'll never set his foot in this house."

"Vaustly impertinent; and you are equally impertinent to bring me such a message. Does that insolent old fellow suppose I'll go to him? No, indeed."

But suddenly, her resolve seeming changed by the loud shouting of several voices and the quick tramping of horses' feet, she and Grindall simultaneously rushed into the hall. At the great entrance they beheld a crowd of people and a blaze of torches, which displayed Lord de Clifford's horse, neighing loudly, and covered with blood and foam, galloping furiously round and round the court.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed the old lady, wringing her hands as she approached the door, "where is De Clifford?"

"Where we must all soon be," said Lee, solemnly, "before that tribunal which has but *one* witness—our own soul! and but one judge—the Lord God who made it! Here," continued he, pointing to the body as the men brought it forward, "here is what *was your* son. And now, having returned good for evil, and brought you your child, who hoped to rob me of *mine*, I'll go to what *was* my daughter."

So saying, the crowd gave way, and Lee, giving one short husky laugh as he looked at Grindall, walked rapidly through it and disappeared.

"Stop—secure—" said the old lady, pointing after him; but, before she could finish the sentence, she sunk down in a fit on the corse of her son.

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CONCLUSION.

"When all our leaves of life are sear'd by nature
In due course, then do we gently drop to sleep
Within the kind bosom of our mother earth;
But the Medean spring, whose fierce unnatural wrath
Doth gem her children's hair with the white blossoms of the grave,
Robs us of life ere death has claim'd his debt."

Unpublished Play.

"And when you blush'd, and could not speak,
I fondly kiss'd your glowing cheek,
Did that affront you?
Oh, surely not; your eyes express'd
No wrath, but said, perhaps in jest,
'You'll love me, won't you?'
For sure my eyes replied, 'I will,'
And you believe that promise still;
You do, sweet, don't you?
Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You'll love me, won't you?"

Hope is a telescope, which brings objects within our reach that are in reality as far distant as ever, therefore Cheveley had constantly looked through it for the last

eighteen months, at the end of which time he discarded it for reality.

It was a lovely morning in the sweet and maiden time of the year, "the gentle month of May," that Cheveley arrived at Grimstone, and, leaving the carriage at the village inn, walked up to the hall. The birds were carolling their happy concert among the young green leaves, and the butterflies, which had not yet exchanged their bridal wings of snowy white for the more gorgeous and matronly ones of purple and gold, seemed playing hide and seek among the flowers. Cheveley's hand trembled violently as he opened the iron gate of the invisible paling that led into the lawn. Two figures were sitting under a tulip tree. They were Fanny and little Julia. The latter instantly recognised him; and, breaking from her aunt, ran up to him, and throwing her arms round him, said,

"Dear Mowbray, I am so glad to see you again."

"And I," said Fanny, extending her hand, "suppose, out of civility, I must say the same thing." When Cheveley had kissed the child and shaken hands very affectionately with Fanny, he stammered out, "Where is Ju—Julia!"

"Julia," replied Fanny, laughing, "is in the drawing-room; there, that room where you see the window open and the blind down; but you really must find your own way there, for I have no idea of losing this beautiful morning by playing Major Nonplus or groom of the chambers to you."

"I think you are quite right," laughed Cheveley, as he kissed his hand and walked on to the window. It was a low mullion window, one half of which was slid back; he listened for a moment, and hearing no sound, gently pushed back the blind and walked in. Lady de Clifford was standing at a table looking for a drawing, with her back to the window; he walked noiselessly up to her.

"I wish," said she, aloud.

"What!" asked Cheveley, passing his arm round her waist and drawing her towards him. Julia uttered a faint scream, and then said, with a blush and a smile,

"That you had not frightened me so."

"Julia, *my* Julia!" said Cheveley, kissing her passionately, as her beautiful head rested on his shoulder, "does not this moment repay us for all the past? Is it not enough if there was no future?"

"È vero, vero," chirped the starling, who had been reinstated within the last few months; but Julia made no answer, for there is a love that has no words, and in this language Cheveley and she conversed for some minutes.

"I almost wish," said she at last, "that we could die *now;* for I, who have never been happy before, am too happy."

"You shall know nothing else, dearest, but happiness till you surfeit on it; and then, for your own good, you know, I must begin a course of conjugal discipline, and make you unhappy again."

"Nay," said Julia.

"No answer, madam, if you please," said Cheveley, kissing her into silence; "implicit obedience I must and will have."

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A month after this truly marital speech saw Julia, Marchioness of Cheveley, installed at Cheveley Place as its happy, loving, and beloved mistress. Beryl, all things considered, bore her faculties meekly, notwithstanding that Mr Sanford began to be *very attentive* to her, till, about a year after her mistress's marriage, at the christening of the little Lord Mowbray, there was such an influx of royalty and fine people, that it was no wonder greatness became an epidemic, and she looked half a head taller.

John Lee and his daughter, with Madge Brindal, who had become Mrs. Datchet, went to America, where Lord Cheveley settled two hundred a year upon him, and Lady Cheveley promised to provide for Mary's child. Mrs. Stokes and her husband were allowed to change the De Clifford to the Cheveley Arms, with a present of a new house, in which the former was so happy for a whole year, that, although the Maidenhead bridge had given way, to the great detriment of the Great Western Railway, and several accidents had happened at sea, she never once thought of attributing any of them to her husband's laziness and stupidity. Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons continued happy in the midst of their *fine family*, which, however, suffered a diminution by Captain Cubs disencumbering them of Miss Caroline; but, dreadful to relate, the very day of the wedding Master Grimstone singed off his brother-in-law's left mustache, so that he found two flames in the Tymmons' family instead of

one. Mr. Joseph Tymmons died as he had lived, a bachelor, and no fellow was ever found for the matchless Seraphina. Mr. Rush got a situation as amanuensis to a literary gentleman, where, by a steady perseverance in the course he is now pursuing, he has every prospect of—starving in a garret; his mother says that he *must* rise, as he speaks Greek and Latin, and all the dead languages, *like a native*, which is likely enough, for he looks like a corpse. Alonzo was ungratefully "*left to better himself*," and went to live with Mr. Hoskins, whose wife died of a broken heart at his extravagance in less than a year. The Simmonses *all* married, no doubt, as the Tymmonses said, by dint of art. Miss Caroline Chubb continued to collect franks; but Miss Caroline Chubb, of Ferrybridge, having in the course of nature departed this life, Miss Caroline Chubb, of Triverton, was obliged to drop the junior. Mrs. Wrigglechops continued to keep her husband son, and regulate his monitory system; therefore, for once, money does *not* make the *mayor* go. Mr. Frederic Feedwell had prevailed upon Mrs. Tadpole to go off with him, and was to meet her for that purpose in a postchaise, ten miles beyond Triverton; but, by some unaccountable mistake, Major Tadpole met him instead, and, after a hearty drubbing, left him to pass the night in a ditch, where he caught a feverish cold, that occasioned him more pain than all the indigestions he had ever had. Fuzboz is supposed to be out of print, as no one has ever heard of him since the Triverton election, having been but once seen since that event, *very drunk*, in the porter's chair at the Garrick. Major Nonplus never says a word about his wealth, having been *really* left forty thousand pounds about six months ago, the miraculous effect of which has been to make him talk less and drink more. About a year after the Lees' departure to America, Freddy Flipps, whom they had taken out as "*a help*," returned with the news of poor Mary Lee's death. Her father did not long survive her, and Mary's child was brought to England by Datchet, where Lady Cheveley had him well and carefully brought up. The Dowager Lady de Clifford had been in a bad state of health since her son's awfully sudden death; and having, contrary to Frump's advice, eaten of a crabapple tart, died of a two days' illness. Her second son, Herbert, the present Lord de Clifford, hastened to England on the melancholy

event, but evinced great fortitude and resignation till after the funeral, when it was discovered that, his mother not having made a will, Blichingly went to her grandchild, Julia Grimstone, as heir at law, so that his lordship had nothing to do but to continue a sort of retail Talleyrand in a very small way, keeping in with every administration. Monsieur de Rivoli had become a member of the Suicide Club at Paris, suicide being what self-love often ends in. The Savilles and Seymours form a delightful society at Cheveley, whose master and mistress evince their own happiness by diffusing happiness to all around; grateful to God for the blessings he has bestowed upon them, each seems to emulate the other which shall best deserve them. Cheveley is vulgar enough to dote upon his wife; and Julia's love and respect for her husband increases daily, from finding that, in every relationship of life, from the smallest to the greatest, he is a MAN OF HONOUR.

THE END.

Date Due